the weekly Standard

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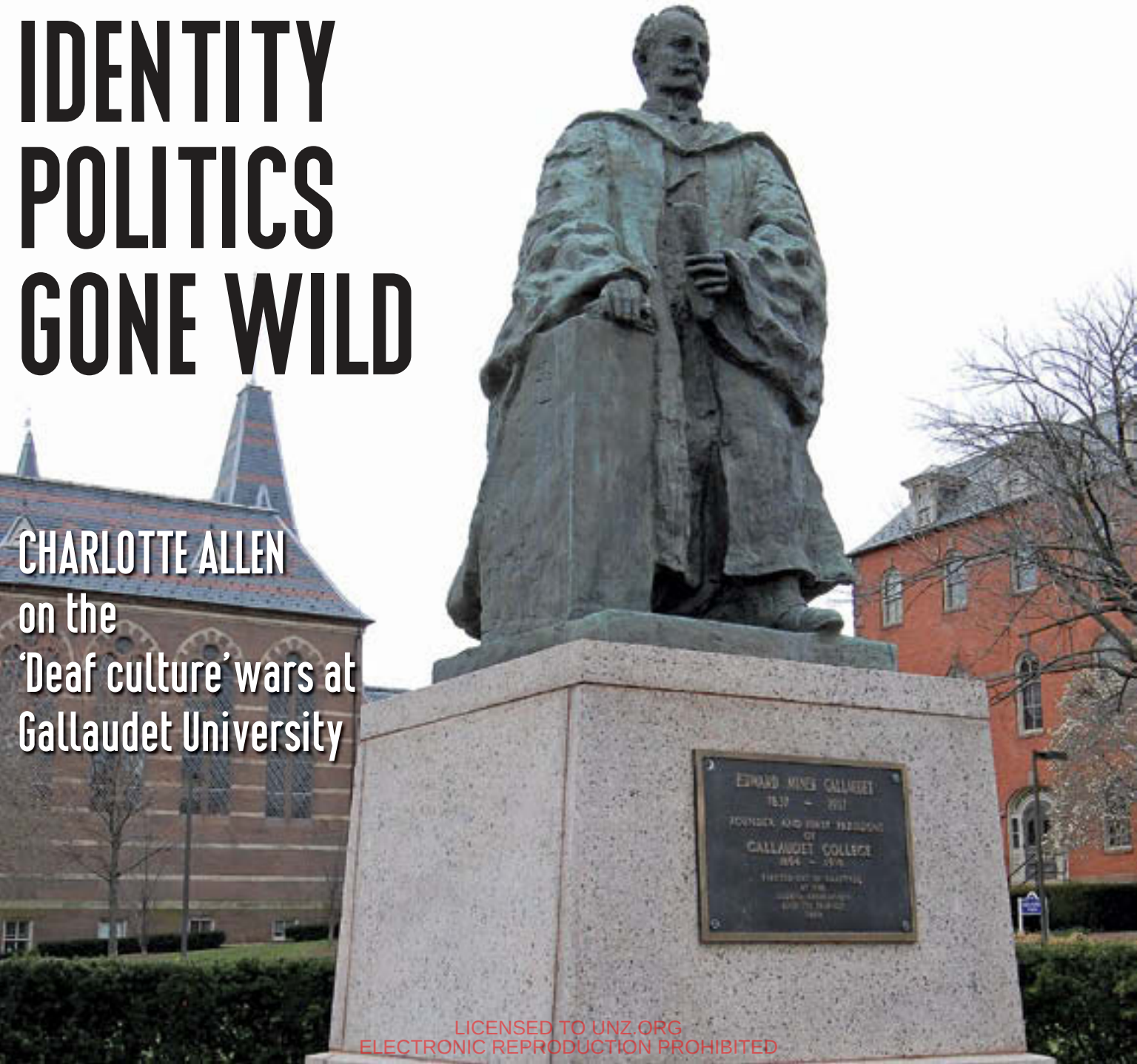
TIME'S RONALD REAGAN
NOEMIE EMERY

IDENTITY POLITICS GONE WILD

CHARLOTTE ALLEN on the 'Deaf culture' wars at Gallaudet University



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Contents

April 2, 2007 • Volume 12, Number 28

4 Scrapbook . . . . . *Fred Thompson for prez, Hillary '1984'.*

6 Casual . . . . . *Joseph Epstein, Frankie Laine fan.*

7 Correspondence . . . . *On Karl Barth and Tom Tancredo.*

9 Editorial . . . . . *Against Timetables*

Articles

10 Minority Rule *Mitch McConnell sets the agenda in the Senate.* . . . . . BY FRED BARNES

11 Al Gore's Fevered Imagination *The global warming tour hits Capitol Hill.* . . . . . BY DUNCAN CURRIE

13 Constructive Engagement? *The new South Africa coddles dictators.* . . . . . BY JACK BLOOM

14 These Blue Dogs Won't Hunt *The Pelosi effect on "conservative" Democrats.* . . . . . BY SONNY BUNCH

16 Al Qaeda's Pakistan Sanctuary *Musharraf appeases the Taliban.* . . . . . BY BILL ROGGIO

Cover: Lev Nisnevitch

Features

18 Identity Politics Gone Wild
The Deaf culture wars at Gallaudet. . . . . . BY CHARLOTTE ALLEN

27 *Time* Present, *Time* Past
Reinventing Ronald Reagan. . . . . . BY NOEMIE EMERY

30 Defining Marriage Down . . .
is no way to save it. . . . . . BY DAVID BLANKENHORN

Books & Arts

33 China Doll *Madame Chiang and her times.* . . . . . BY CHRISTINE ROSEN

35 Popular Government *How can the Constitution serve the public interest?.* . . . . . BY HERMAN BELZ

38 Mother Tongue *There's a lot of history in the history of English.* . . . . . BY JAMES SEATON

40 Switched-On Book *Is the Sony Reader the library of the future?.* . . . . . BY DAVID SKINNER

42 Men of Property *Why a hotel on Boardwalk beats a house on Marvin Gardens.* . . . . . BY ERIN MONTGOMERY

44 Parody . . . . . *Special Global Warming issue of* Cosmopolitan.

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The Real Fred Thompson?

The Scrapbook is ready to declare a preference for 2008: Fred Thompson, former Tennessee senator and, more important, star of the big screen and small. Our only proviso: that he not back down from the strong positions staked out by his movie and TV characters over the last two decades (as compiled by our colleague Victorino Matus for The Daily Standard):

* ***No Way Out*** (1987): In this Kevin Costner-Gene Hackman political thriller, Thompson plays CIA director Marshall. His Central Intelligence colleague Kevin O'Brien explains that a murder suspect was likely having an affair with the victim:

Kevin O'Brien: *Get ready for this. We think she's either David Brice's or Scott Pritchard's mistress. . . .*

CIA Director Marshall: *Well, spilt milk. And you can forget about Pritchard. He's homosexual.*

Kevin O'Brien: *I'll be damned.*

CIA Director Marshall: *So will he, if you believe the Old Testament.*

Eternal damnation for homosexuals? Well, this might work to his advantage in the primaries but could prove tricky in the general election.

* ***The Hunt for Red October*** (1990): In this Cold War classic, Thompson plays Rear Admiral Josh Painter, commander of an aircraft carrier involved in the search for a Soviet submarine that may be trying to defect. Painter questions CIA analyst Jack Ryan about the Kremlin's next move:

Adm. Painter: *What's his plan?*

Jack Ryan: *His plan?*

Adm. Painter: *Russians don't take a dump, son, without a plan.*

Though a bit scatological, Thompson displays here the keen insight of a Sovietologist. (Incidentally, during an editorial luncheon here at The Weekly Standard in January 2006, Thompson said he'd have to call *The Hunt for Red October* his favorite of the films he has worked on—even beating out *Curly Sue*.)

* ***Days of Thunder*** (1990): NASCAR dads will love Thompson as the burly racetrack owner Big John in this Tom Cruise vehicle. In the scene below, Big John lets loose on Cruise's character, Cole Trickle, and another driver for their antics:

Big John: *If you two wanna turn yourselves into a greasy spot out on a country road somewhere, go right ahead. I don't give a s— and I don't think anybody else does, but you two monkeys are not going to do it on my racetrack. You ever heard of a "Japanese Inspection"? Japanese Inspection, you see, when the Japs take in a load of lettuce they're not sure they wanna let in the country, why they'll just let it sit there on the dock till they get good and ready to look at it. But then of course, it's all gone rotten . . . ain't nothing left to inspect. You see, lettuce is a perishable item . . . like you two monkeys. You trade paint one more time, you so much as touch, I'm gonna Black Flag the two of you, and tear apart your racecars for three-hundred laps. Then, if you pass inspection and you put your cars back together, I might let you back into the race. Now, just to show there's no hard feelings we're all gonna go to dinner together.*

Much is happening here, but the two important themes are Thompson's acting as a uniter (not divider) and his expert knowledge of Japanese trade issues.

* ***Die Hard 2*** (1990): In this sequel to the action-thriller *Die Hard*, Thompson costars as Trudeau, chief air traffic controller at Dulles Airport. When Bruce Willis, as John McClane, tries to convince Trudeau that someone's about to take over the airport and drastic action needs to be taken, Trudeau exercises caution:

Trudeau: *Hey. Something serious happens every night, only it doesn't make the newspapers. Ever see those guys on TV, juggling knives and chain saws? That's what we're doing with those planes up there, only we do it one-handed 'cause the other hand's playing three-card monte with the planes on the ground . . .*

What we see here is Thompson in crisis mode. He is acutely aware of the stress air traffic controllers experience on a daily basis, what with all the planes, knives, chainsaws, and card games going on.

* ***In the Line of Fire*** (1993): What better way to prepare for the White House than by playing the part of Harry Sargent, the president's chief of staff? Sargent may not be the most likeable guy in the world, especially when confronting Secret Service agent Frank Horrigan (Clint Eastwood) about a possible assassination attempt, but he still has the best of intentions, as can be seen in this exchange:

Sargent: *Isn't it possible this guy has pushed some buttons in you? Maybe you're overreacting a little.*

Horrigan: *I'm just trying to protect your boss, damn it.*

Sargent: *So am I. We're trailing . . . in the latest polls. He could be out of a job in six weeks. He's got to be seen.*

Horrigan: *Even if it kills him?*

Sargent: *Next order of business?*

Thompson understands how vital it is for a president not to be cowering behind his security agents. He knows what it takes to win.

* ***Law & Order*** and ***Law & Order: Criminal Intent*** (2002-'07): Perhaps most revealing is the role Thompson plays on the *Law & Order* series as New York district attorney Arthur Branch:

D.A. Arthur Branch: *It's not enough to do good. . . . You gotta be seen doing good.*

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Or then again:

D.A. Arthur Branch: *Sometimes the good you do won't do you any good.*

Thompson also knows how to look on the bright side:

D.A. Branch: *Well, I guess it beats dousing yourself in rum and lighting up a Cohiba.*

Most important is his sense of high calling:

E.A.D.A. Jack McCoy: *You can rewrite the law when you're appointed to the Supreme Court.*

D.A. Arthur Branch: *God willing.*

Foes will no doubt search for less impressive, possibly even damaging lines of dialogue to stifle the nascent campaign. Over the past 20 years, Fred Thompson has said and done a lot. He may have sounded insensitive in *Necessary Roughness* or obtuse in *Feds*. And God only knows what he had to say in *Aces: Iron Eagle III* or those two fateful episodes of *Matlock*. ♦

NCLB 'Rithmetic

Fairfax County, Va., superintendent of schools and former math teacher Jack Dale complains to *Washington Post* columnist Marc Fisher about the effects of the No Child Left Behind law: "You focus obsessively on multiplying two-digit numbers, as opposed to how to apply that knowledge in the real world and how to play with mathematics in a creative way." The horror! Next thing you know, students will be forced to start diagramming sentences again. ♦

Liberal Paranoia Watch

As reported in the March 20, 2007, *San Francisco Chronicle*: "Chris Finnie, a Santa Cruz-based Democratic operative, said the widespread coverage given to [the anti-Hillary video based on Apple Computer's '1984' ad] in GOP circles suggests the ad could have come from a Republican operative and smacks of 'Swift Boat' tactics used in 2004 against Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry.

"'It killed two birds with one stone,' she said, by sharply attacking Clinton as being a political drone and smudging 'Obama's positioning as the "Mr. Clean" of politics. This is politics as usual, and by running a smear ad that is associated with him, it puts a dent in that image.'"

As widely reported the next day (we quote here the AP version), "The mystery creator of the Orwellian YouTube ad against Hillary Rodham Clinton is a Democratic operative who worked for a digital consulting firm with ties to rival Sen. Barack Obama. Philip de Vellis, a strategist with Blue State Digital, acknowledged in an interview with The Associated Press that he was the creator of the video, which portrayed Clinton as a Big Brother figure and urged support for Obama's presidential campaign."

Oops. No reaction yet from Finnie. Given her keen grasp of Republican perfidy, real or imaginary, we expect the DNC to bring her aboard soon. ♦

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Casual

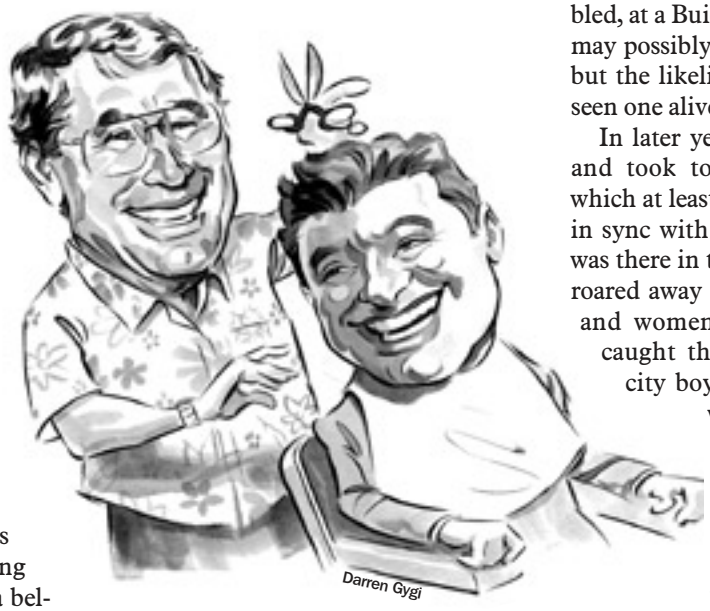
Memory Laine

Every generation in America grows up with its own singer or singing group. Elvis is perhaps the most notable example. All sorts of men and women now in their early and middle sixties still vibrate to his hit songs of the late fifties and early sixties. For those who came a bit after, it was The Beatles and then the Rolling Stones, who Tom Wolfe once described as like the Beatles "but more lower-class deformed." Just before my time, especially for the girls known as bobbysoxers, it was Frank Sinatra. The singer of my own generation—kids who came of age during the late 1940s and early '50s—was a man named Frankie Laine, who died a couple of months ago at the age of 93.

As a singer, Frankie Laine was a dramatizer; his songs all told stories. Most of these stories took place out of doors, with geese and mules and devils and whips cracking all over the joint. Laine was a belter, always singing at the top of his voice. Nobody slept while he was on. He made way for other dramatizing belters, among them Johnnie Ray and Tom Jones. Not a brilliant tradition, let us agree.

"Cry of the Wild Goose" was the title of one of Laine's greatest hits, in which he sang, "I must go where the wild goose goes"—wherever that was. It is Frankie Laine who sings in the background of Mel Brooks's *Blazing Saddles*. He had twenty-one gold records, for such singles as "Jezebel," "I Believe," "Jealousy," "High Noon," and "That's My Desire," every one of them sung with the throttle out, the pedal all the way down.

Laine was born in 1913, *né* Francesco Paolo LoVecchio, the son of a barber. (The crooner Perry Como had himself been a barber before he caught on as a singer.) He chose the stage name Laine after Lane Technical High School, where he had gone in Chicago. He started out as a marathon dancer—not an easy way to make a living—and then turned to singing with jazz bands.



But only when he turned the volume up and got out of doors did he strike the gong of success.

I first heard Frankie Laine in the early 1950s, when he was nearly 40. This was before the age of television, so in those days one frequently listened to singers without any notion of their looks, unless there had been articles about them in *Life* magazine. In Frankie Laine's case, given his songs, one always imagined him singing with mountains in the background, storm clouds above, horses cantering off in the distance. If John Wayne had sung, he would have sung like Frankie Laine. Asked to describe him before I saw him, I'd have said that he had rugged good looks.

When I did get to see Frankie Laine in the flesh—as I did onstage at the Chicago Theater when I was 15—he looked, far from a hero in a cowboy flick, more like the guy who ran the general store, or the bartender who ducked under the bar at the first hint of gunplay. He was a wide-body, heavyset; not fat, but not especially trim either. He wore a toupee, and had an impressive nose. The aura he gave off was completely urban: He was one of those Italians who could have been taken for Jewish, or the other way round: a Jewalian, an Italiew. He had briefly worked as a car salesman, and a car salesman is what he most resembled, at a Buick dealership, I'd say. He may possibly have eaten a wild goose, but the likelihood of his ever having seen one alive seemed remote.

In later years, Laine grew a beard and took to wearing cowboy hats, which at least brought him a bit more in sync with his hit songs. But what was there in this unsubtle singer, who roared away about the still wild west and women tormenting him, that caught the attention of so many city boys? (I don't think Laine was a big item with young women.) A few of his songs could be danced to, but most, as the old disc jockeys used to say, were "for our listening pleasure." In what, quite, I now wonder, did the pleasure reside?

Was there something in urban boys of that day that wanted to sight wild geese, crack whips over the heads of mule trains, and have our lives destroyed by Jezebels? Were these our secret desires? They were never mine. My own notion of roughing it, then as now, is poor room service; I prefer a woman who, far from tormenting me, is punctual. What the true attraction of Frankie Laine was will evidently have to remain a mystery, to be solved perhaps only after I learn where, exactly, those damn wild geese went.

Joseph Epstein

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Warm Barth

On the occasion of Arthur Schlesinger's death, Ernest W. Lefever chose to belittle Karl Barth, the greatest Christian theologian of the last several centuries ("The Theologian and the Historian," March 19). Lefever concludes that Barth does not belong in the same group as Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin, because Barth was "simply too otherworldly to comprehend the wonder and tragedy of the human drama." I wonder what Lefever makes of Barth's involvement in the Confessing Church movement and his opposition to Hitler, crystallized in his virtual authorship of the Barmen Declaration. Did Barth lose his position as a professor of theology at Bonn, and was he forced out of Germany, because of his "otherworldliness"? Lefever criticizes Barth for listening to Mozart too much and for not reading the newspaper more so that he could "understand that freedom itself was at stake in the East-West struggle." Yet it was precisely the freedom of Mozart's music, particularly its freedom from either a pious or tragic "seriousness," that enabled Barth to hear the joy of God's creation in all its worldliness.

It is true that Barth thought theology was not about the Cold War, or even about America's defense of freedom. In that he differed from Reinhold Niebuhr. Barth thought theology was about God, whose grace, while well-acquainted with suffering and even the tragic, saves us from, among other things, the heaviness of our own very serious and even virtuous agendas. In another context, when attacked by some Dutch neo-Calvinists who also found his love of Mozart baffling, Barth wrote: "Let us not blame them for accusing me of being a 'monist' … [but] obviously to offend me the more, they so far forget themselves as to use unrepeatable terms in disparagement of W.A. Mozart. In so doing they have, of course, shown themselves to be men of stupid, cold, and stony hearts to whom we need not listen." Given the cover story The Weekly Standard ran on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth, I would hate to think that one of its contributors would now join such men of "cold and stony hearts."

Thomas W. Currie
Charlotte, N.C.

Ernest W. Lefever responds: Of course I am aware of Barth's courageous fight against Hitler, and elsewhere I have praised it. But when it came to postwar Europe, he and another famous signer of the Barmen Declaration, Pastor Martin Niemoeller, had problems recognizing the evil of Stalinism and its threat to political and religious freedom. As it turned out, Niemoeller moved further to the left than Barth and was awarded the Lenin Peace Prize by the Soviet Union for his public stance. And, as I said in my piece, Barth acknowledged that his visit to America had further opened his political eyes to the blessings of democracy and the dangers of totalitarianism.

Credo in Tancredo

I was dismayed by David Harsanyi's criticism of my congressman, Tom Tancredo ("Tancredo's Credo," March 12). The *Denver Post*, the more liberal of our two liberal newspapers, has long proposed an open borders policy and has targeted Rep. Tancredo in particular for his firm stance on illegal immigration. Tancredo believes that Colorado should not offer in-state tuition and scholarships to those who have broken our laws and come here illegally—what gall! The Tancredo I know is no "calculating politician" who "craves publicity." He is in fact a very humble man who, though he does not oppose immigration, thinks it absurd to endorse illegal immigration. That does not make one a "xenophobic dimwit" (to borrow from Dave Barry's dimwitted joke).

Susan Wilhelm
Aurora, Colo.

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the weekly Standard

Wrong on Timetables

Let's give congressional Democrats the benefit of the doubt: Assume some of them earnestly think they're doing the right thing to insist on adding to the supplemental appropriation for the Iraq war benchmarks and timetables for withdrawal. Still, their own arguments—taken at face value—don't hold up.

Democrats in Congress have made three superficially plausible claims: (1) Benchmarks and timetables will "incentivize" the Maliki government to take necessary steps it would prefer to avoid. (2) We can gradually withdraw over the next year so as to step out of sectarian conflict in Iraq while still remaining to fight al Qaeda. (3) Defeat in Iraq is inevitable, so our primary goal really has to be to get out of there. But the situation in Iraq is moving rapidly away from the assumptions underlying these propositions, and their falseness is easier to show with each passing day.

(1) *The Iraqi government will not act responsibly unless the imminent departure of American forces compels it to do so.* Those who sincerely believe this argument were horrified by the president's decision in January to increase the American military presence in Iraq. It has now been more than ten weeks since that announcement—long enough to judge whether the Maliki government is more or less likely to behave well when U.S. support seems robust and reliable.

In fact, since January 11, Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki has permitted U.S. forces to sweep the major Shiite strongholds in Baghdad, including Sadr City, which he had ordered American troops away from during operations in 2006. He has allowed U.S. forces to capture and kill senior leaders of Moktada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army—terrifying Sadr into fleeing to Iran. He fired the deputy health minister—one of Sadr's close allies—and turned a deaf ear to Sadr's complaints. He oversaw a clearing-out of the Interior Ministry, a Sadrist stronghold that was corrupting the Iraqi police. He has worked with coalition leaders to deploy all of the Iraqi Army units required by the Baghdad Security Plan. In perhaps the most dramatic move of all, Maliki visited Sunni sheikhs in Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province and formerly the base of al Qaeda fighters and other Sunni Arab insurgents against his government. The visit was made possible because Anbar's sheikhs have turned against al Qaeda and are now reaching out to the government they had been fighting. Maliki is reaching back. U.S. strength has given him the confidence to take all these important steps.

(2) *American forces would be able to fight al Qaeda at least as well, if not better, if they were not also engaged in a sectarian civil war in Iraq.* The idea of separating the fight against al Qaeda from the sectarian fighting in Iraq is a delusion. Since early 2004, al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) has sought to plunge Iraq into sectarian civil war, so as to critically weaken the government, which is fighting it. AQI endeavors to clear Shiites out of mixed areas, terrorize local Sunnis into tolerating and supporting AQI, and thereby establish safe havens surrounded by innocent people it then dragoons into the struggle. Now, heartened by the U.S. commitment to stay, Sunni sheikhs in Anbar have turned on AQI. In response, AQI has begun to move toward Baghdad and mixed areas in Diyala, attempting to terrorize the locals and establish new bases in the resulting chaos. The enemy understands that chaos is al Qaeda's friend. The notion that we can pull our troops back into fortresses in a climate of chaos—but still move selectively against al Qaeda—is fanciful. There can be no hope of defeating or controlling al Qaeda in Iraq without controlling the sectarian violence that it spawns and relies upon.

(3) *Isn't it too late? Even if we now have the right strategy and the right general, can we prevail?* If there were no hope left, if the Iraqis were determined to wage full-scale civil war, if the Maliki government were weak or dominated by violent extremists, if Iran really controlled the Shiites in Iraq—if these things were true, then the new strategy would have borne no fruit at all. Maliki would have resisted or remained limp as before. Sadr's forces would have attacked. Coalition casualties would be up, and so would sectarian killings. But none of these things has happened. Sectarian killings are lower. And despite dramatically increased operations in more exposed settings, so are American casualties. This does not look like hopelessness.

Hope is not victory, of course. The surge has just begun, our enemies are adapting, and fighting is likely to intensify as U.S. and Iraqi forces begin the main clear-and-hold phase. The Maliki government could falter. But it need not, if we do not. Unfortunately, four years of setbacks have conditioned Americans to believe that any progress must be ephemeral. If the Democrats get their way and Gen. Petraeus is undermined in Congress, the progress may indeed prove short-lived. But it's time to stop thinking so hard about how to lose, and to think instead about how to reinforce and exploit the success we have begun to achieve. The debate in Washington hasn't caught up to the realities in Baghdad. Until it does, a resolute president will need to prevent defeatists in Congress from losing a winnable war in Iraq.

—Frederick W. Kagan and William Kristol

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Minority Rule

Mitch McConnell sets the agenda in the Senate.

BY FRED BARNES

Senate minority leader Mitch McConnell has a theory about divided government. It's this: When one party holds the White House, and the other holds one or both houses of Congress, the chances of passing landmark legislation improve dramatically. McConnell cites two examples. The first is the passage in 1983 of a Social Security reform (and bailout) bill that brought President Reagan and Democratic House speaker Tip O'Neill together. The other came in 1996 when President Clinton signed a sweeping welfare reform bill drafted by a Republican Congress.

A theory held by the leader of the minority party in Congress normally wouldn't be significant. But it is in McConnell's case because he has suddenly emerged as the king of Capitol Hill. Though Democrats control both the House and the Senate, McConnell has greater influence on what Congress passes and in what form than either House speaker Nancy Pelosi or Senate majority leader Harry Reid. So it matters that he believes the circumstances are ripe for reforming immigration and Social Security.

Until McConnell became Senate minority leader, these two issues had been left to President Bush to promote. And it was a fair assumption that Democrats, having seized Congress, would take charge of the immigration issue while keeping Social Security reform off the congressional agenda altogether. But Democrats have dawdled.

Patrick Leahy, the Vermont Democrat and petulant chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, inadvertently cleared the way for McConnell on immigration. Leahy said it was up to Bush, not Democrats, to act first by offering a proposal. He implied the president was insincere in his support for comprehensive immigration reform, which the entire pro-immigration community and other Democratic senators know is untrue.

McConnell stepped in. His goal on most issues is to maximize Republican power by unifying as many of the 49 Republican senators as possible behind a single position. This is necessary to block Democratic legislation because a successful filibuster requires 41 votes. On immigration, however, McConnell's "personal preference" is to pass reform legislation, not block it. And he is well on his way to producing a bill that would win the support of Republican senators from John Cornyn of Texas, a restrictionist, to John McCain, who cosponsored a liberal immigration bill last year with Democratic senator Edward Kennedy. This year Kennedy has complained that McCain is avoiding a discussion with him about immigration.

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At McConnell's instigation, Republican senators have been meeting for weeks to discuss immigration reform. The group includes Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, Jon Kyl of Arizona, Mel Martinez of Florida, and Johnny Isakson of Georgia. Isakson is important because the Republican bill now taking shape is centered around his idea of staggering reform by doing border security first, then taking steps to deal with the illegal immigrants who are already here.

The latter steps would be pursued once the Department of Homeland Security certified that five measures necessary to border security had been undertaken. These include the hiring of 14,000 new Border Patrol agents, authorizing the construction of 370 more miles of fence along the border with Mexico, deployment of unmanned aerial vehicles, deployment of ground radar, and the creation of a biometric ID card so employers can verify whether an immigrant worker is legally in the country.

Certification would trigger a program to allow illegal immigrants to gain legal status, though not citizenship. But the bill is unfinished. Once drafted, it would be presented to Kennedy in hopes of reaching a compromise with Democrats. Kennedy is sure to demand at least one thing: a provision for guiding illegals in the United States toward becoming citizens.

There's an incentive for both parties to reach agreement on immigration. Democrats would get credit for passing a major piece of reform legislation with something for restrictionists (beefed-up border security) and for pro-immigrant forces (some form of legalization). Republicans would get an issue that divides them bitterly off the table before the 2008 election.

As for taking on Social Security, that's problematic. Some Democrats still boast about having thwarted President Bush's attempt to reform the system—or "privatize" it from the Democratic perspective—in 2005. And the expectation has been that Social Security would be left for the next president to grapple with.

McConnell doesn't want to wait. He would like to set up a bipartisan procedure for reaching a compromise that probably would reject both a tax increase and the private investment accounts funded by payroll taxes that Bush and conservatives have championed. More likely, it would involve means-testing of benefits, which would trim increases for those in

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upper income brackets. Other possible changes include increases in the regular retirement age and the early retirement age.

Social Security reform, however, may be out of reach and, for now anyway, McConnell has set his sights low. All he is seeking is what he calls "a process that could lead to a conclusion." The process would bring together Republicans and Democrats from the House and Senate, along with Bush administration officials. They would craft a reform measure to be sent to both houses under a procedure allowing no amendments, only an up or down vote, just as is done in the case of trade treaties.

"It's a way to get a result," McConnell says. When Bush proposed Social Security reform and sought Democratic cosponsors, "we got nothing." McConnell's scheme may fail as well. "We haven't gotten to a process yet," he says. "I'm not optimistic we're going to get there."

In three months as Senate Republican leader, McConnell has proved himself to be adept at foiling Democrats. That's his negative role. But he also envisions a positive role. "We need to do something on both these issues," immigration and Social Security, he says. "They are uniquely suited to being decided by divided government." On the other hand, "it's really easy to do nothing around here." ♦

Al Gore's Fevered Imagination

The global warming tour hits Capitol Hill.

BY DUNCAN CURRIE

Speaking before a joint hearing of two House panels on March 21, Al Gore likened the fight against "the climate crisis" to the battle waged against overwhelming odds by a band of Spartan warriors at Thermopylae in 480 B.C., dramatized in the new movie *300*. "This Congress is now the '535,'" said the former vice president, facing "a true planetary emergency." He urged U.S. legislators to find "uncommon moral courage" and "redeem the promise of American democracy." That way, they can tell future generations, "This was our Thermopylae."

Gore's testimony at twin House and Senate hearings the same day was long on metaphors. He mentioned the trials overcome by America's "greatest generation," drew parallels to the Cold War and the Marshall Plan, and fired off soundbites like "Nature is on the run" and "The planet has a fever." "If your baby has a fever," Gore quipped, "you go to the doctor. If the doctor says, 'You need to intervene here,' you don't say, 'Well, I read a science fiction novel that tells me it's not a problem.' If the crib's on fire, you don't speculate that the baby is flame-retardant. You take action."

His noisiest Senate foe was James Inhofe, an Oklahoma Republican who has called global warming "the greatest hoax ever perpetrated on the American people." Inhofe showed a frame from Gore's Oscar-winning film, *An Inconvenient Truth*, which asks viewers: "Are you ready to change the way you live?" He then challenged Gore to take a "Personal Energy Ethics Pledge" to "consume no more energy for use in [his] residence than the average American household by March 21, 2008." And please don't mention "offsets" or any other "gimmicks" used by the wealthy, Inhofe added.

Gore dodged. "We do not contribute to the problem," he insisted, arguing that his family—whose massive energy consumption recently made headlines—purchases "wind energy" and other "green energy" to ensure their lifestyle is "carbon neutral." Inhofe frequently interrupted Gore, and was himself interrupted by Democratic committee chairman Barbara Boxer of California, who reminded Inhofe that he no longer holds the gavel. "Elections have consequences," Boxer snapped, prompting applause.

Indeed they do. And one consequence of the 2006 election is that Democrats are now better positioned to pass legislation curbing carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi aims to do so this year, and the resistance from Republicans is slowly weakening. Despite all the criticism of his "hypocrisy" and his trademark hyperbole, Gore has won the first part of the debate, at least for now: Even many of his critics agree that manmade CO_2 emissions have played a significant role in the Earth's recent warming. That much was evident at the hearings. Gore boasts that the "scientific consensus" is firmly on his side.

But Gore's penchant for doomsday projections tugs him beyond the "consensus." His movie trots out the specter of sea levels rising by up to 20 feet and flooding cities such as Miami, San Francisco, and New York. As GOP congressman Joe Barton of

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Texas reminded Gore, the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a United Nations body, predicts a sea level increase of between 7 and 23 *inches* by the end of this century (though earlier IPCC estimates were much higher).

Gore has warned that global warming could lead to "killer heat waves." But Danish statistician Bjørn Lomborg, who testified before the House panel right after Gore, noted that any increase in heat-related deaths must be balanced against the corresponding *decrease* in cold-related deaths. For the United States, Lomborg said in his written testimony, "the net *lower* death count from global warming in 2050 is estimated at 174,000 per year." Lomborg also chastised Gore for overstating the (still unsettled) linkage between climate change and hurricane activity, and for doing the same with malaria.

"He has got carried away and come to show only worst-case scenarios," said Lomborg. Other experts concur. "Part of [Gore's] scientific audience is uneasy," the *New York Times* reported in mid-March. "In talks, articles, and blog entries that have appeared since his film and accompanying book came out last year, these scientists argue that some of Mr. Gore's central points are exaggerated and erroneous. They are alarmed, some say, at what they call his alarmism."

In his movie, Gore claims that "we have just ten years to avert a major catastrophe" related to global warming. Ten years from 2006, when the film premiered, is 2016. The Kyoto Protocol, which the Bush administration famously rejected, expires in 2012. "I'm in favor of Kyoto," Gore said. "We should work toward de facto compliance" and toward a new, "tougher" CO_2 treaty by 2010.

But what about China and India? Though among the world's biggest CO_2 polluters, they and other developing countries are exempted from Kyoto. In a report released last November, the International Energy Agency (IEA) predicted that China, which is building new coal plants at a furious pace, will eclipse America as the largest emitter of CO_2 "before 2010."

Lomborg made clear how little Kyoto would accomplish, and at tremendous cost: "Even if it had been successfully adopted by all signatories (including the U.S. and Australia), and even if it had been adhered to throughout the century," Kyoto "would have postponed warming by just 5 years in 2100 at a cost of $180 billion annually." So why should the United States embrace a Kyoto-style straitjacket, for so little gain, if China, soon to be the planet's worst CO_2 polluter, doesn't? Gore said America needed to display leadership.

With reference to planning for the future, Gore conceded that nuclear energy might be "part of the solution" (though only "a small part").

His other proposals for U.S. lawmakers included an immediate "freeze" on CO_2 emissions accompanied by a CO_2 cap-and-trade regime; a CO_2 tax; a moratorium on construction of new coal plants without carbon capture and sequestration technology; a ban on the incandescent light bulb; an "electranet" to enable the buying and selling of power generation; stricter automobile fuel economy standards; a "carbon-neutral mortgage association"; and more complete corporate disclosure of CO_2 emissions.

A careful calculation of the potential costs and benefits of these measures stands in jarring contrast to Gore's life-and-death urgency. Climate economist David Montgomery, a vice president at the consulting firm CRA International, testified recently before the House Ways and Means Committee that "previous studies" of emission-capping proposals by him and his colleagues showed annual losses to the U.S. economy ranging "from 0.3 percent to about 1.9 percent of GDP in 2020." How much would such regulations aid the fight against climate change? "Even if all industrial countries" met the Kyoto targets, argued Montgomery, it "would not be sufficient to prevent most of the temperature increases now projected for the next century."

In a similar vein, Kevin Trenberth, chief of the Climate Analysis Section at the National Center for Atmospheric Research, testified before the House earlier this year in support of mitigation actions, but put them in perspective. "The 2007 IPCC report makes clear that even aggressive mitigation would yield benefits many decades in the future, and that no amount of mitigation can avoid significant climate change," said Trenberth. "The inertia of the climate system and the long life of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere mean that we are already committed to a significant level of climate change." Thus, "we should adapt to climate change by planning for it and making better predictions of likely outcomes on several time horizons."

With reference to planning for the future, Gore conceded that nuclear energy might be "part of the solution" (though only "a small part"). "I'm not a reflexive opponent of nuclear," he told GOP senator Johnny Isakson of Georgia. The Energy Department has projected that U.S. electricity consumption will jump nearly 50 percent by 2030. As former New Jersey governor Christine Todd Whitman, a pro-nuclear green Republican, points out, "Renewables and conservation aren't gonna get us there." Nuclear power is a low-carbon alternative to coal, and can deliver far greater capacity than solar or wind.

Then again, nuclear energy presents a raft of safety, proliferation, and cost concerns. But as Gore himself emphasized last week, there are no free-lunch solutions to this particular planetary emergency. ♦

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Constructive Engagement?

The new South Africa coddles dictators.

BY JACK BLOOM

Johannesburg

When Ghana celebrated its 50th year of independence in early March, the biggest cheer at the event was for Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe. He is still a hero to large numbers of Africans despite his brutal suppression of opponents, the highest inflation in the world (1,700 percent), 80 percent unemployment, and an average male life expectancy of 37 in his country.

Mugabe received similar applause from assembled dignitaries when he visited South Africa for the second inauguration of President Thabo Mbeki in April 2004. This illustrates the continuing emotional pull of Third World solidarity against "imperialism" that lingers on in South Africa's post-apartheid foreign policy.

South Africa's official policy on Zimbabwe is "silent diplomacy," which boils down to very little pressure at all. The recent savage beating of Zimbabwean opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai evoked a tepid expression of "concern" from deputy foreign minister Aziz Pahad, who appealed to "leaders of opposition political parties to work towards a climate that is conducive to finding a lasting solution to the challenges faced by the people of Zimbabwe."

Of course, when the ruling African National Congress (ANC) was in exile, it sang a different tune, leading worldwide efforts to isolate South Africa with sanctions and castigating the Reagan administration for its "constructive engagement" policy. Zimbabwe's neighbor, South Africa, has massive unused leverage, supplying electricity (on credit!) and controlling the supply of goods through border posts. In the 1970s, South African prime minister B.J. Vorster effectively pulled the plug on white-ruled Rhodesia in this way.

In broader foreign policy, the trend is similarly toward supporting anti-West dictators, justified on the basis that they supported the ANC during the struggle years. When Nelson Mandela was president, there was rhetoric about a human-rights-based approach to foreign affairs, but dictators were still embraced, especially Fidel Castro. Indonesia's Suharto was feted on a visit to South Africa, and awarded the highest order of honor.

South Africa took up a two-year nonpermanent seat at the United Nations Security Council in January this year. It was quite predictable, although human rights groups expressed surprise, that South Africa used its new seat, along with permanent members China and Russia, to reject a resolution calling on the military junta in Burma to stop human rights abuses. The quip was made that the government "has yet to meet a dictator it does not like."

The weak excuse on Burma was that it was a matter not for the Security Council but rather the Human Rights Council. South Africa's role in the latter body and its predecessor has been to block country-specific resolutions of censure, except when it comes to Israel. There is an extraordinary focus by the South African government on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, far out of proportion to South Africa's minimal leverage in the area and to other, much worse conflicts in Africa, such as Darfur. The official line is for a negotiated two-state solution that satisfies the legitimate interests of both parties, but the preponderance of censure falls on Israel.

South Africa had close ties to Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, opposing sanctions and questioning the legality of the "no fly zones" in that country. The ANC and Iraq's Baath party cemented fraternal ties, and when Saddam's deputy prime minister Tariq Aziz visited South Africa in July 2002, he was privileged to address the ANC caucus in parliament. In the run-up to the American invasion in 2003, deputy foreign minister Pahad visited Baghdad and made every effort to prevent Saddam's ouster.

Like much else in South Africa, the issue was racialized, with Mandela wondering whether Iraq was treated differently than Israel because Iraq was "black" and Israel was "white." It emerged later that top South African business and political figures had benefited hugely from the U.N.'s Oil-for-Food program. Furthermore, an ANC-linked company transferred $1.5 million to the ANC that it had received from a state-owned oil company dealing in Iraqi crude, a highly irregular transaction that has been dubbed "Oilgate." Foreign funding of the ANC has been extensive. Official recognition of China was delayed for four years because of lavish donations made by Taiwan in 1994. Nelson Mandela disclosed in 1999 that King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahyan of the United Arab Emirates had each given $10 million to the ANC. Meanwhile, $50 million was donated from Malaysia's Mahathir Mohamad and $60 million from Indonesia's Suharto.

South Africa has in recent years strengthened its ties with Iran, defending Tehran's right to develop nuclear technology and allegedly offering to supply it with uranium (this is detailed in the Jan./Feb. edition of the Arms Control Association journal *Arms Control Today*). In August 2006, Pahad asserted that the international

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reaction to the Iranian nuclear program was the result of "the inherent discriminatory nature of the [Nuclear Nonproliferation] treaty, which created two distinct groups: the haves and the have-nots."

Iran's chief nuclear negotiator, Ali Larijani, met with President Mbeki on February 25. The Department of Foreign Affairs denied a report that the aim of the meeting was to seek assurances that South Africa would not back further sanctions against Iran, insisting it was a "routine" meeting.

The Jewish community expressed alarm when the government failed to condemn Iranian president Ahmadinejad's outburst about wiping Israel off the map. The response was that this was an "administrative oversight," an explanation that was repeated when South Africa failed to join the 103 countries that cosponsored the U.N. General Assembly resolution on Holocaust denial in January.

In monitoring terror suspects, South Africa is probably doing more than it admits publicly in view of criticism from vocal Muslim and other pressure groups. It has defended in court the controversial 2005 deportation of a terror suspect to Pakistan, described by opponents as an illegal abduction. While South Africa recently refused an American request to place two local Muslims on the U.N. Security Council's terror list, it has officially admitted that al Qaeda operatives are in the country, with some sympathizers among the local Muslim community, and that "small" terror training camps could be operating here.

Mbeki has had cordial meetings with President Bush, and trade flourishes between the two countries. South Africa endeavors to punch above its weight in international affairs. It understands this to mean lining up with countries like China, Russia, India, and Brazil as a counter to perceived U.S. dominance. With its new seat on the U.N. Security Council, it will be interesting to watch whether South Africa chooses to rise above the Third World solidarity approach and crude anti-Americanism that has too often prevailed ♦

These Blue Dogs Won't Hunt

The Pelosi effect on "conservative" Democrats.

BY SONNY BUNCH

Running for Congress last fall in North Carolina, Heath Shuler staked out ground as a conservative Democrat. In a district held comfortably by Republican Charles Taylor since 1990, the former all-American quarterback distanced himself from Democratic House leader Nancy Pelosi. The day after defeating a scandal-dogged Taylor by 8 points in a district George W. Bush had carried by 14, Shuler feigned uncertainty as to whether he would support Pelosi's candidacy for speaker. "I want to see which other member decides to run against Pelosi," Shuler said, knowing full well she was the only legitimate candidate in the Democratic caucus.

Shuler ran as a pro-life, pro-gun moderate. He was one of the few insurgent Democrats who didn't believe in the immediate withdrawal from Iraq urged by John Murtha, and one of only two to use the word "win" on his campaign website with regard to Iraq. "We cannot leave a political vacuum in Iraq and threaten to further destabilize the entire region," he wrote. "We must win this war." He portrayed himself as a pro-business moderate, and, after arriving on Capitol Hill, joined the Blue Dog Coalition, a caucus of fiscally conservative Democrats. "As a small business owner I have a deep appreciation for the issues facing these companies," Shuler said, promising to "work closely with small business owners to ensure the tools and resources they need to compete, expand, and create jobs are available."

That was then. Since he joined the House, Shuler's votes have become indistinguishable from his liberal colleagues'. He voted to oppose the president's plan to surge troops into Baghdad and for the supplemental setting benchmarks for the Iraqi government and a timetable for withdrawal. He cosponsored the recent "card-check" legislation backed by big labor and Nancy Pelosi's most senior adviser, a liberal bull from California by the name of George Miller. He also voted for the Pelosi-backed plan to dismantle the president's prescription drug benefit for Medicare, a benefit that has dramatically increased the number of seniors covered and enjoys an approval rating hovering around 80 percent. And Shuler left small businesses out to dry when he supported an increase in the minimum wage without demanding an offsetting tax reduction.

Shuler's record is hardly unique—three quarters of the newly elected House Democrats hail from districts previously held by Republicans. That has not stopped them from joining their leadership in supporting the more liberal aspects of the Democratic agenda. According to an analysis in the *Washington Post*'s Capitol Briefing blog, through the first seven weeks of the 110th Congress, the 42 new members "have voted in near lockstep with Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other top Democrats." Out of almost 4,000 total votes cast by the new members, a mere 20 were cast against positions advocated by Pelosi, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, and the rest of the Democratic caucus' leadership. Only 14 of the 42 had cast even one roll call vote deviating from the party line.

Of course, some of this is to be expected. The majority of votes on the floor of the House are procedural

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or meaningless. Resolutions mourning the death of Gerald Ford, observing the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr., and celebrating Boise State's victory in the Fiesta Bowl (although you'd think the Oklahoma delegation might have opposed that one) have all passed unanimously this year, to cite just a few examples. Unity held on even the important and potentially divisive topics, however—in Pelosi's much-vaunted "first 100 hours," the only substantial defections by novices were those of Shuler, Brad Ellsworth, Charlie Wilson, and Joe Donnelly, who voted against their leadership with regard to expanding stem cell research, and Nick Lampson's objection to the Ending Subsidies for Big Oil Act of 2007.

Pelosi and Hoyer can't get too worked up about these betrayals: Shuler and Ellsworth campaigned as pro-lifers in districts strongly opposed to embryonic stem cell research, while Lampson holds the Texas seat once occupied by Tom DeLay. More important, neither bill was in any danger of being defeated. Democratic higher-ups made sure to stamp out dissent on the union-backed "card check" measure. Todd Harris, the head of communications and media for the Coalition for a Democratic Workplace (CDW), denounced the legislation as a "bill to rob workers of the right to a federally supervised private election when deciding whether to join a union." In the place of a secret ballot, union organizers would have the option of asking for a publicly posted card that would show anyone interested who was in favor of unionizing, and who was still holding out. One Republican operative told me the "card check" vote "is going to cause some problems for these new Democrats. It seems that they've already decided that they want to vote with their leadership, at least early on."

Harris believes "the whole thing was a huge political overreach by Pelosi. . . . The fact that organized labor wields so much influence within the Democratic Congress that even vulnerable freshmen like [Kansas's Nancy] Boyda and Shuler and [Florida's Tim] Mahoney had to support it ought to be worrisome for someone looking for a pro-business Congress." This has not been the only vote to inspire confidence in House Republicans hoping to take back the chamber in 2008.

Consider one odd sequence during the first week of March. Republicans in the Natural Resources Committee attempted to attach an amendment prohibiting the funneling of federal funds into the hands of lobbyists to a bill aimed at "preserving sites of significant American heritage." On a party line vote at the behest of leadership, the Democrats on the committee (including Shuler) voted it down. Later that very same day, Republican Rep. Patrick McHenry offered an identical amendment on the House floor, saying, "If the Democrat majority was truly elected and is committed to severing the link between legislation and lobbyists, they will vote for this motion. . . . [I]t is gut check time for them." Shuler, along with every other Democratic member of the resources committee, then reversed course and voted on the record to ban publicly funded lobbyists.

"It's telling that they would make a 180-degree turn on the national stage, when some of their constituents might be watching on C-SPAN," said Aaron Latham, McHenry's press secretary. Ken Spain, spokesman for the National Republican Congressional Committee, cruelly alluded to Shuler's less than stellar career with the Washington Redskins, predicting that "flip-flopping on something as simple as keeping taxpayer dollars out of the pockets of Washington lobbyists" portends a stay in D.C. "as brief as the time he spent here as a professional quarterback." The GOP is portraying Shuler and other potentially vulnerable freshmen as toeing the line for leadership in committee, but voting differently when it becomes politically expedient to do so. In this way, they can be marked as either beholden to their left-wing leadership, or unprincipled on important issues, a lose-lose proposition politically.

Tying freshmen to their leaders is nothing new. In 1995, *Roll Call* reported on a Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee study trumpeting the news that "the 73 freshman Republicans in the House voted with the GOP leadership almost 97 percent of the time during the first 100 days" of the session, adding that "the DCCC has already briefly aired ads in two districts 'morphing' the Republican occupant of the seat into [Newt] Gingrich and has invoked the Speaker's name repeatedly in direct mail solicitations." While Nancy Pelosi remains a more popular figure nationally than Gingrich was at the time, GOP partisans feel she can still be used as a dead weight to drag down congressional Democrats in more conservative parts of the country. Interest groups are already turning up the heat—in the wake of the card-check vote, the CDW ran radio ads in Shuler's, Boyda's, and Mahoney's districts condemning the bill.

For their part, the new Democrats do not seem overly concerned. Tim Walz is one of the freshmen who rode the Democratic wave to victory. Despite the fact that George W. Bush carried his Minnesota district by 4 points in 2004, he is convinced he has made the right votes thus far, from the anti-surge measure to the pro-union legislation. "It is definitely pro-worker," he said in regard to card-check. "There's a real sense in this country that all trade laws were done to be anti-labor. There's a real sense that corporate profits are up, worker productivity is up, yet worker rights are stagnant." He also said that, though there is obviously pressure coming from the whip operation to toe the line, "It's always been made clear to me by leadership that you vote your conscience, your constituents, and then your caucus, in that order."

Republicans have already started to portray their opponents as having reversed that set of priorities. "The question," says Spain, "is whether these 'conservative' Democrats will have the sense to do an about-face and start casting votes that reflect the needs of their districts, not the demands of Nancy Pelosi." That, and whether their Republican opponents can make the charge stick. ♦

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Al Qaeda's Pakistan Sanctuary

Musharraf appeases the Taliban

BY BILL ROGGIO

Aamir Qureshi / AFP / Getty Images

Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf on parade in Islamabad, March 23

The security situation in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province continues to deteriorate. Once again, Western pressure on the government of President Pervez Musharraf has failed to prevent Pakistan from handing over territory to the Taliban, this time to a group called the Movement for the Enforcement of Islamic Laws. On March 17, a Pakistani "peace" committee struck a verbal agreement with the Mohmand tribe, under which the government promised to cease military activity in Bajaur in exchange for the tribe's promise not to shelter "foreigners" or allow cross-border attacks into Afghanistan.

A look at the players shows this agreement to be another pact with the devil. The tribal militants are led by Faqir Muhammad, government sources told *Dawn*, an English-language Pakistani newspaper, the day the agreement was made. Faqir Muhammad is a senior leader of the Movement for the Enforcement of Islamic Laws, which provided the ideological inspiration to the Afghan Taliban in the 1990s. Faqir's group sent over 10,000 fighters into Afghanistan to fight U.S. forces during Operation Enduring Freedom in October 2001. His two sons and two cousins were arrested by Pakistani authorities after returning from Afghanistan.

The Jamestown Foundation refers to Faqir Muhammad as "al-Zawahiri's Pakistani ally." His home in the village of Damadola was targeted by a joint U.S.-Pakistani airstrike in January 2006 after al Qaeda senior leader Ayman al-Zawahiri was believed to have been there. Zawahiri and Faqir escaped death, but Abu Khabab al-Masri, the chief of al Qaeda's WMD program, and several other senior al Qaeda leaders were killed in the attack.

In October 2006, Faqir called Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar "heroes of the Muslim world" and vowed joint efforts to fight the "enemies of peace" in Bajaur. Days later, the Chingai madrassa, which doubled as an al Qaeda and Taliban training camp, was hit by a U.S. airstrike, killing 84 Taliban, including Faqir's deputy, Liaquat Hussain. Faqir responded by attacking the Dargai military base with a suicide bomber.

Under the leadership of Faqir Muhammad, whom the Pakistani government refuses to arrest, Bajaur has become an al Qaeda command and control center for launching operations into eastern Afghanistan. Kunar, the adjacent Afghan province, is one of the most violent in the country.

None of this will come as a surprise to anyone tracking the situation in northwestern Pakistan. Since the signing of the Waziristan Accord on September 5, 2006, essentially ceding North Waziristan to the Taliban and al Qaeda, attacks in both Pakistan and Afghanistan have skyrocketed. Afghanistan has seen an increase in attacks of more than 300 percent, and battalion-sized groups of Taliban fighters have been hit while crossing the border from Pakistan. Cross-border raids are up more than 200 percent, and NATO forces have repeatedly engaged in hot pursuit across the Pakistani frontier. U.S. artillery has begun to strike at large Taliban formations in Pakistani territory. Suicide bombings in Afghanistan increased fivefold from 2005 to 2006. This year, there have already been more suicide attacks in Afghanistan than in all of 2006.

The situation has gotten so bad that in February, Lieutenant General Karl Eikenberry, outgoing U.S. commander in Afghanistan, called "a steady, direct attack against the command and control in sanctuary areas in Pakistan" essential to preempt the expected Taliban spring offensive. Senator Carl Levin, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, voiced similar concerns last month, saying, "Long-term prospects for eliminating

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the Taliban threat appear dim so long as the sanctuary remains in Pakistan, and there are no encouraging signs that Pakistan is eliminating it."

The rise of North and South Waziristan as hubs for Taliban and al Qaeda activity has not only damaged Afghan security and reconstruction. Unwilling to confine its activities to the border areas, the Pakistani Taliban also has designs on the settled regions of the North-West Frontier Province, an area the size of Florida. This was clear as long ago as March 2006, when Aftab Khan Sherpao, the Pakistani interior minister, sounded the alarm. "The Taliban's sphere of influence has expanded to Dera Ismail Khan, Tank, and the Khyber Agency, where clerics of the area have started to join them," Sherpao said. "There has been a sharp increase in attacks on heavily defended military targets in these areas as well."

Asfandyar Wali, leader of the secular, democratic Awami National party, has also been trying to arouse concern about the Taliban's growing power in the North-West Frontier Province. Wali recently went on Pakistani television and reported that the district of Kohat is now under Taliban control.

And in the last six months, the Taliban has conducted a concerted roadside and suicide bombing campaign in the settled regions of Pakistan. Suicide bombings have occurred in Islamabad, Peshawar, Quetta, Mir Ali, Dera Ismail Khan, and Dera Adamkhel. Pakistani security forces were attacked by the Taliban with roadside bombs and ambushes in Tank, Dera Ismail Khan, Bajaur, and North and South Waziristan. A Pakistani military base in Dargai was hit by a suicide attack, which killed over 45 recruits exercising outside the base. Faqir Muhammad was responsible.

Throughout the North-West Frontier Province, schools, nongovernmental organizations, foreign banks, barber shops, and music and video stores have received notices ordering them to shut down or face attacks—a standard Taliban modus operandi. Some shut down, others were destroyed by bombs.

All the while, the Taliban is working to consolidate its power by removing anyone who remotely opposes its radical agenda. Tribesmen are routinely found murdered, often with their throats cut, stabbed multiple times, or beheaded. They always have a note pinned to their body identifying them as a "U.S. spy." More than 250 "spies" have been murdered in the past year. The network of pro-Western tribal leaders in the region has essentially been dismantled, according to an American military intelligence official.

The mastermind of this terror and bombing campaign is Baitullah Mehsud, the most powerful Taliban leader in South Waziristan. He is estimated to have an army of over 30,000 trained fighters. The Pakistani government negotiated yet another of its "peace" deals with Baitullah back in 2005, in which he agreed to cease attacking Pakistani security forces and sheltering "foreign fighters." Baitullah never lived up to the agreement.

In January, one of Baitullah's training camps in the small town of Zamazola was hit by an airstrike, purportedly by Pakistani security forces. It is widely accepted, however, that U.S. Special Operations Forces conducted the attack. Baitullah then embarked on the recent suicide campaign, killing scores nationwide. "They launch airstrikes on us and we respond with suicide attacks," Baitullah told a crowd after the strike on Zamazola. He also promised to continue the fight in Afghanistan, saying, "The holy warriors will give a tougher fight this year than last year." Pakistani police traced the string of suicide strikes directly to Baitullah—yet the Pakistani government sent negotiators to meet with him, and they accepted his protestations of innocence. Baitullah is untouchable.

To illustrate just how badly the Waziristan Accord has failed, last week a powerful Taliban commander fought with an al Qaeda-linked Uzbek group in South Waziristan. More than 160 Uzbeks and Taliban are reported killed. The Pakistani government was quick to represent this fight as proof that the accord was working: In the government's version of events, pro-government tribes had battled foreign jihadists to enforce the agreement. But nothing could be further from the truth. The fighting began after Uzbeks killed an Arab al Qaeda fighter supported by the Taliban. To settle the conflict, the Taliban sent in senior commanders, including Baitullah Mehsud and Mullah Dadullah Akhund, military leader of the Afghan Taliban, to negotiate a truce between the factions.

Now, the Taliban and al Qaeda openly rule in the tribal lands. Terror training camps are up and running, secure from harassment by Pakistani security forces. Al Qaeda leaders are thought to be sheltered in the region, as Mike McConnell, the director of national intelligence, confirmed in February.

The Bajaur agreement signals once again that the Pakistani government is unwilling to police its own borders, and is prepared to hand over even more territory to the Taliban and al Qaeda. Behind the agreement is the hidden hand of General Hamid Gul, the former chief of Pakistan's shadowy intelligence service, the ISI.

Gul, an Islamist, is credited with laying the groundwork for the establishment of the Taliban and is said to be friends with Mullah Omar. The 9/11 Commission believed he had warned Osama bin Laden prior to the 1998 missile strike launched by President Clinton, allowing bin Laden to escape. Last year, Gul sought an injunction from the Pakistani supreme court to prevent Pakistani military action in Bajaur. President Musharraf's dismissal of the chief justice on March 9 is rumored to be related to this case.

The United States smashed al Qaeda's base of operations in Afghanistan in 2001, only to see it transferred to northwestern Pakistan. The refusal of the Musharraf regime to deal with this situation, and the active participation of elements of the Pakistani military, intelligence, and political elites in supporting our enemies, are worrisome for our efforts in the war on terror—and threaten the very existence of a non-jihadist Pakistani state. ♦

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Identity Politics Gone Wild

The Deaf culture wars at Gallaudet University

By Charlotte Allen

Last September and October it was the 1960s all over again at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. All the elements were present from that bygone era of militant campus radicalism: the student protesters with their linked arms and picket signs, the hunger strike, the sprawling, slovenly tent city where students camped out instead of sleeping in their dorms, the occupation of buildings, the invasion of administrators' offices, the cessation of classes, the shutdown of university business, the campus lockout that included chained gates and a denial of entry to all except those who supported the protesters. Finally, on October 13, there were mass arrests of gone-limp demonstrators—133 in all—that made presumed martyrs out of those who suffered minor injuries in the scuffles. All that was missing from this 2006 version of those heady days of 40 years ago was Mark Rudd and his famous bullhorn. That would have been unnecessary, however, for Gallaudet is a university for the deaf, founded by an act of Congress in 1864, the nation's only liberal-arts college with the specific mission of providing higher education for students who cannot hear or are hard of hearing. Gallaudet, named after the famous 19th-century deaf-educator Thomas Gallaudet, is structured as a private institution, with about 1,800 students (1,200 of whom are full-time undergraduates), but U.S. taxpayers provide almost three-quarters of its annual budget, about $108 million a year.

Although the Gallaudet campus was completely shut down for only three days, classes were effectively canceled for at least two weeks, partly because some protest-supporting Gallaudet professors refused to teach as a way of expressing solidarity with their students, and partly because the protesters themselves both barred non-protesting professors from their classrooms (literally locking them out by blockading the gates of the iron fence that surrounds the campus), and, according to observers, threatened non-protesting students into staying away as well. Reports of the poisonous atmosphere at Gallaudet during the demonstrations were so alarming that in early January a team from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, the regional accrediting agency for colleges in the Mid-Atlantic area, visited Gallaudet and issued a report warning of "dire consequences in terms of accreditation" if the events of September and October 2006 were to be repeated.

"[C]losing an institution through protest, preventing or intimidating students from attending class, or precluding the open exchange of ideas brings the institution out of compliance with Middle States' accreditation standards," the January 12 report stated. Gallaudet is already in serious trouble for other reasons. A 2005 report from the U.S. Department of Education rated the university "ineffective," citing declining enrollments, a chronically low graduation rate (signaling that many students who are admitted cannot handle college work and drop out), and the inability of more than 30 percent of Gallaudet graduates to find jobs within a year of graduation. In January the department raised Gallaudet's rating to "adequate," which is an improvement if not exactly a recommendation.

Part of the problem is that academically talented deaf students have many other options besides Gallaudet these days; they can go to Harvard, or to a good state school, many of which offer programs geared specifically to the deaf. Advances in medical technology, chiefly cochlear implants, have enabled the brains of many deaf young people to process sounds more easily, and they thus have an easier time in mainstream education. Another part of the problem, though, is the peculiar campus culture that flourishes at Gallaudet, a culture fostered by radical students and faculty members that has bred those 1960s-style confrontations and that—as both enrollment and application numbers at Gallaudet clearly show—turns off many young people who want

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Corbis / Ken Cedeno

Anti-Fernandes protests at Gallaudet University, October 18, 2006

only to obtain good educations and prepare for careers.

In a further parallel to the academic upheavals of the 1960s, the upshot of the Gallaudet disruptions last fall was exactly the same as what transpired at several prominent American universities 40 years ago: the ouster of the president. Clark Kerr, president of the University of California system, left office in 1967 after several years of violent upheavals on UC campuses. The noted political scientist Grayson Kirk resigned after 15 years as president of Columbia during the summer of 1968 following a month and a half of picket lines, boycotted classes, occupied buildings, and arrests. Harvard's president Nathan Pusey followed suit by tendering his resignation in a cloud of police tear gas in 1970, after two successive springs devoted to student rioting that had included broken windows, canceled classes and final exams, taking over the dean's office, and a campus lockout, in this case of Harvard Yard.

And so it went at Gallaudet, where 50-year-old Jane K. Fernandes, a deaf woman who had been unanimously selected by the board of trustees from a field of 24 applicants to be Gallaudet's president starting this January, when her predecessor I. King Jordan retired, had her contract summarily revoked by the trustees on October 29. In fact, getting rid of Fernandes, who had served as provost at Gallaudet from 2000 to 2006, was the very aim of the Gallaudet strike. The university is now operating under an interim president with a two-year contract, 74-year-old Robert Davila, a Gallaudet graduate (class of 1953), until a permanent president can be found.

Davila, a veteran administrator at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (a unit of the Rochester Institute of Technology created by Congress in 1969) and the Education Department under President George H.W. Bush, is regarded by his former colleagues as a deft political maneuverer who may well succeed in bringing peace and restoring academic standards to Gallaudet, but who plays his cards close to the vest. "All I know about the protests is what I learned in the media," he said in a recent interview at his campus office. "There are a lot of outstanding programs on this campus," he added. "The instructors take pride in their work, they're professionals, they have expectations of their students. There has always been a diverse group of people here."

Back in the sixties, it was difficult for most outsiders to figure out why so many U.S. college campuses—Harvard, Columbia, the University of California, and numerous others, their students basking in post-World War II comfort, prosperity, and unprecedented educational opportunity—exploded in conflagration for what now seem the most tangential of reasons: the draft? Vietnam? ROTC on campus?

The same went for Fernandes, whose precipitous removal after weeks of disruption that brought the Gallaudet campus to a standstill left many outside observers puzzled. She was supposed to be "not deaf enough" to satisfy her opponents because she had grown up using her voice and had not learned American Sign Language (ASL) until age 23—even though she had been deaf from birth, had a deaf mother and brother, and boasted a career devoted to deaf education, including the promotion of ASL.

Or maybe—as a new argument went after the "not deaf enough" argument seemed to fall on deaf ears among outsiders, so to speak, and was quickly shelved—Fernandes wasn't nice enough. In the fall of 2005 when she was provost, after Gallaudet students first destroyed the football goal-posts in a fit of post-game exuberance and then ran amok during a homecoming party at Washington's Hyatt Regency Hotel, chasing each other down halls, waking guests, pulling fire alarms, and causing some $15,000 worth of damage, Fernandes issued a

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stern reprimand to the entire student body that did not go down well.

Some students later complained to news reporters that Fernandes was too "strict." She had confiscated the school yearbook in 2001 because, among other things, it included a photo taken without permission of a female student sitting on the toilet and jokingly suggested that another female student who wanted to be a middle-school teacher was sexually interested in young boys. (In an email, Fernandes said that parents of both students had complained, and she was concerned about the potential invasions of privacy and the yearbook's all-around poor taste.) Fernandes was said by her opponents to lack the charm and extroversion of Jordan. "She Doesn't Say Hi," read a student picket during the first round of protests in May. Other students told reporters that Fernandes didn't smile enough. Those were reasons to shut down the campus? That the students didn't *like* Fernandes? That Jordan, who had promoted her to provost in 2000, did? (Jordan had not consulted the Gallaudet faculty before promoting Fernandes seven years ago, and that violation of protocol had made her unpopular with many professors, who charged Jordan with favoritism.)

Again, head-scratching seemed in order. There can scarcely be a college campus in America whose provost isn't looked on as the disciplinary heavy and whose president isn't seen as an expensive-suited glad-hander who gets to live in a fancy mansion. Perhaps Fernandes did indeed lack the ideal personality for navigating the rocky shoals of clashing faculty, student, and alumni interests that is the life of a university president. Yet she had a solid scholarly publication record and a strong résumé as administrator of deaf primary and secondary schools in Hawaii and on the Gallaudet campus before becoming provost. She had beat out stiff competition for her job, and last May she had garnered the overwhelming support of the trustees who named her the next president. On most other university campuses, Fernandes would at least have been given a chance to prove herself.

The campaign of vituperation against Fernandes, and ultimately against Jordan (Fernandes's opponents accused him of pressuring the trustees to make her president, a charge Jordan denied), was extraordinary. Those who participated in the protest composed a group that extended well beyond the Gallaudet student body to include faculty members, administrators, alumni who regularly visited the campus to join in, and the 127-year-old National Association of the Deaf. It started the very day the trustees announced their selection of Fernandes, May 1, 2006, when protesting students donned T-shirts bearing her silk-screened photograph and the words "Know Your Enemy." It ended October 29, when she was burned in effigy on campus in celebration of her dismissal.

A list of demands issued by the Gallaudet University Faculty, Staff, Students and Alumni (FSSA), an organization specifically formed to oppose Fernandes's presidency, included not only a demand that Fernandes be fired but also that she be barred from ever setting foot on the Gallaudet campus again. Jordan was to be stripped of the title President Emeritus, and no campus building was ever to bear his name or that of his wife, Linda (that was a dig at a campus art gallery named after Linda Jordan, a potter who taught ceramics classes on campus). A blog titled Buck Naked Bison (a play of words on Gallaudet's school colors, buff and blue, and its mascot, the bison) launched by Brendan Stern, a 2006 graduate of Gallaudet, featured in its logo a photoshopped montage of Jordan and Fernandes frolicking together, the former clad only in his skivvies. Other blogs mocked Fernandes's hairstyle and the pounds she had gained during the years since she was named Miss Deaf Iowa in 1983 as a graduate student at the University of Iowa, where she obtained her doctorate in comparative literature.

A flyer distributed during last fall's protest listed a seemingly random—and bizarrely personal—grab bag of objections to Fernandes: "Does not sign ASL well . . . Mother and brother are deaf and oralists [a pejorative term for deaf people who speak] . . . Is not a people-person . . . Does not get along with many faculty and students . . . Is under I. King Jordan's control." In its oddest allegation, the flyer implied that during her career as a Gallaudet administrator before becoming provost, Fernandes "fell in love" with her hearing husband-to-be, James Fernandes, a now-retired communications professor at Gallaudet with whom she has two teenage children, in order to win a coveted post as head of the university's department of sign communications. The flyer also hinted that James Fernandes was the power behind his wife's throne and had pulled strings with Jordan in order to secure his wife's selection as Jordan's successor. Some of this language in the flyer—"not a people person," "fell in love," strings-pulling husband—sounded, well, sexist. But even though Fernandes had been selected from a large pool of mostly male competitors to be one of only a few dozen women presidents of U.S. universities, not a single feminist organization, deaf or hearing, supported her during her ordeal.

As for Jordan, the institution's first deaf president, he had once been a revered figure at Gallaudet. His own selection had come about via a student protest (titled Deaf President Now), although of a somewhat less personal and confrontational nature than that surrounding Fernandes, after the trustees bypassed him in 1988 in favor of a hear-

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ing woman, Elizabeth Zinser. Zinser tendered her resignation after just three days in office, whereupon the trustees selected Jordan. Most observers agreed that Gallaudet's having a deaf president for the first time in its century-long history was a good thing, yet there were a few—such as a prescient editorial writer for the *Washington Times*—who wondered whether the university had set a bad precedent by essentially allowing the students themselves to select the president, a prerogative that is supposed to be solely the trustees'.

Although Gallaudet's academic reputation faltered, Jordan carried out his duties with energy and verve, building the university's endowment from $5 million to more than $175 million during his 18-year tenure and adding numerous new buildings and programs to the once-sleepy Victorian-era campus, which, while park-like and meticulously manicured, has the misfortune of being located in a semi-industrial inner-city backwater of northeast Washington, where the two main sources of gainful employment outside the university gates are food-wholesaling and drug-dealing. In gratitude for his raising Gallaudet's profile and that of deaf people in general, Gallaudet students often compared their president to Martin Luther King Jr.

AP / Caleb Jones

Jane Fernandes, Gallaudet commencement, May 12, 2006

During the Fernandes debacle, however, Jordan's stock plummeted as fast as a sub-prime mortgage security. On the anti-Fernandes blogs that proliferated during the protest, the once-iconic "Dr. Jordan" sometimes became "Irving" (his first name), just as King Louis XVI of France became "Louis Capet" in the tumbrel. It was suddenly remembered that Jordan was perhaps not "deaf enough" to suit many students, either, for he had lost his hearing only at age 21 (in a motorcycle accident), used his voice fluently, and like Fernandes, was said to be not quite up on his ASL. Angel Ramirez, a 1997 Gallaudet graduate, put it this way on his blog Triumph of the Spirit:

> This was an unspoken truth that was talked about within the inner confines of the Deaf community but not to the general public. For the past 18 years, the Deaf community has played a façade of accepting Dr. Jordan as one of their own, when in reality he was not. He was simply a caretaker until the appointment of a true Deaf individual as president. Then, and only then, would the movement for a Deaf President Now that began in 1988 be complete.

Ramirez here gets to the heart of the matter. The Gallaudet campus exploded not because Fernandes lacked a sufficiently engaging personality. Her opponents obsessively focused on American Sign Language proficiency and what it meant to be a "true Deaf individual" (even Davila, as he jokingly admitted during his interview, is probably "not deaf enough," for he lost his hearing in early childhood instead of being born deaf and thus is not a "native" user of ASL, and like Jordan and Fernandes, he uses his voice, a marker of political incorrectness) because of yet another phenomenon forged during the 1960s and belatedly recapitulated last fall at Gallaudet: the mixture of anger, self-pity, and clannish exclusiveness that is radical identity politics.

Deaf activists have followed in the footsteps of racial activists, redefining themselves not as people with auditory handicaps but as members of a linguistic minority that had been oppressed and marginalized by the speaking majority because they used sign language to communicate instead of speech. Just as black activists a generation ago began calling themselves Black with a capital B, deaf activists began calling themselves Deaf with a capital D. The National Association of the Deaf, a leading deaf-rights advocacy group based in Washington, sternly reprimands those hapless souls who use the genteel term "hearing-impaired" to refer to the deaf: "Deaf and hard of hearing people believe that there is nothing wrong with them, and that their culture, language, and community are just as fulfilling as the ones experienced by the mainstream society."

In 1994 deaf activist M.J. Bienvenu, a onetime administrator at Gallaudet, told *New York Times* magazine writer Andrew Solomon that deafness was "no more a disability than being Japanese would be." Deaf activists are not unique in their efforts to redefine themselves as merely different from—and victimized by—the mainstream. Over the past few years, advocates for the autistic and even the

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chronically obese have argued that society ought to regard them as members of discriminated-against minority groups rather than as people with physiological problems.

It is understandable that deaf people who are competent in every way except for their inability to hear would not care to be defined as defective and thus, as they suggest, somehow less than fully human. It is also uncontestable that deaf people have been, and continue to be, subject to overt and subtle discrimination by a misunderstanding mainstream. The fact remains, however, that the mammalian brain is structured to perceive sound via the auditory nerve, and that people who cannot hear speech—or music or the honking of horns or the chirping of birds—lack something useful that most other people possess. Furthermore, although the National Association of the Deaf strenuously argues that deafness is not a disability, the organization at the same time pushes for maximum enforcement of the Americans with Disabilities Act with respect to its members.

The result is a strange irony in which it is politically impermissible for deaf people to wish that they could hear. In 2002, reporter Liza Mundy wrote an article for the *Washington Post* magazine about two deaf lesbians, both with degrees from Gallaudet, who had sought out a congenitally deaf sperm donor for the two children they were raising. A deaf employee of the National Association of the Deaf made the mistake of telling Mundy, "I felt, just for a fleeting second, bad that my children were deaf." Although the employee, Nancy Rarus, had emphasized that she was merely expressing her own personal opinion, the organization rushed out a press release dissociating itself from any "misperceptions" she might have fostered concerning deaf people's view of themselves.

Central to the fashioning of Deaf (in contrast to deaf) identity politics is the privileged status of American Sign Language. Although ASL is sometimes described by deaf activists as "the language of the deaf" and the third most-used language in the United States after English and Spanish, a 2006 article published in *Sign Language Studies* by three researchers at Gallaudet contends that the latter proposition is almost certainly untrue (and always was, in immigrant-filled America) and the first proposition may be dubious as well. Out of the approximately 1 million Americans who are functionally deaf, according to statistics cited at Gallaudet, well over half became deaf past the age of 65, use their voices fluently, and perceive no particular need for a sign language. As for the remaining half-million or so, no one really knows how prevalent ASL use is in their homes, although estimates of the number of its users have ranged from 360,000 to 517,000—a substantial but not enormous figure in a country of 300 million.

Furthermore, ASL is only one of several sign languages used in the United States by deaf people and those who communicate with them. It is the only one, however, that is not based in some way upon English or other spoken languages. It is a gestural lingua franca that originated among deaf people for use by them alone, and for decades it was used only by deaf people among themselves, transmitted from deaf parent to deaf child at home and from deaf child to deaf child at school. Even at Gallaudet, whose namesake, Thomas Gallaudet, and his son Edward Gallaudet, the university's first president, were strong proponents of instruction for the deaf in sign language—bucking the prevailing 19th- and early 20th-century theory that deaf people should be taught to speak and read lips at all costs (something many people born deaf never can master)—the form of sign language used in class was essentially a manual version of English spelling, phonics, and syntax, designed with the express purpose of helping students learn to read and write in English. Outside of class, Gallaudet students communicated with each other in their own language that became known as ASL.

The language also flourished at the deaf social clubs that used to exist in many cities, as well as on the playgrounds and in the dormitories of the state-run residential schools for the deaf that were, until recently, the only places that deaf children could obtain a primary and secondary education. If those youngsters wished to attend college after graduation, there was only one choice for them: Gallaudet (that is no longer true, what with the National Technical Institute and a host of recent federal laws mandating interpreters and other services for deaf students on mainstream college campuses). For postgraduate studies, deaf students used to be entirely on their own. Davila described his struggles to maintain his straight-A average through graduate school in classes whose professors he could not hear.

In 1960 a scholar named William Stokoe published a study showing that ASL, contrary to what had been generally believed in the hearing world, was not crude pantomime but a complete visual language with its own grammar and structure. That turnabout led to ASL's becoming the language of deaf instruction (in contrast to the earlier English-based signing) at Gallaudet and elsewhere. During the 1960s, '70s, and '80s, ASL-fluent hearing teachers and interpreters were trained for classrooms, in the high hopes that systematic exposure of deaf young people to the complexities of ASL would better prepare them to master the complexities of English literacy, which has historically been difficult for those who have never heard a phonetics-based language. Everyone interviewed for this article, deaf and hearing alike, agreed that ASL is a language of amazing beauty, richness, and suppleness that has generated expressive poetry and drama. Nonetheless,

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ASL is so radically different from English in word-order and syntax that its claims to help deaf young people learn English have been the subject of debate, with some—including Jane Fernandes—advising hearing parents to learn ASL themselves and teach it to their deaf infants so as to give them a language (instructional materials exist for this purpose), while others, including many deaf people, deem ASL fine for deaf socializing but useless as an English teaching tool. The debate is something like that waged over bilingual education of Hispanic children in the hearing world. Here is an example of an English sentence and its ASL translation, sent by email from a deaf woman:

> English: When I was a little girl, I used to love to go to downtown looking in stores for something good for me to enjoy playing with at home.
>
> ASL: ME LITTLE FOND GO TOWN STORE FIND GOOD PLAY FOR HOME ENJOY.

The ASL sentence is not primitive, as it looks on paper, for other gestures supply the missing morphology and subordination. Yet it is easy to see that ASL is as different from English as, say, Chinese. Furthermore, ASL is useful only for communicating with *American* deaf people (along with some Canadians); the sign language used by many British deaf, for example, is alphabet-based and incomprehensible to most ASL users. Finally, ASL is unusually fragile, because its very nature cannot be captured in written form.

Furthermore, after at least three decades of ASL ascendancy in deaf schools, the English literacy of deaf people—essential for success in the hearing job world—remains distressingly low, with half of deaf 17-year-olds still reading at the fourth-grade level or below. So it is not surprising that many parents, even deaf parents such as Fernandes's mother, have opted to train their deaf children to learn voiced speech and lip-reading if they can, or to use something called Signed Exact English, an ASL hybrid that follows English syntactical rules. Added to that is the fact that ASL is relatively difficult to learn as a latecomer, even for older deaf children and deaf adults (it typically takes two years to become proficient), so many hearing parents never bother, either cobbling together their own sign systems for their deaf children or using Cued Speech, an easy-to-learn mode of phonetic signing as one talks.

The fact that ASL use was officially discouraged for many decades in deaf schools has made it an ideal underdog "victim" issue around which deaf activists could build their vision of Deaf culture. It is now possible to major as an undergraduate and obtain a graduate degree in Deaf Studies, a field in which the courses, imbued these days with postmodernist denunciations of capitalism and patriarchy, teach the students that the deaf are a "colonized minority" (the language comes from the course catalogue at Fernandes's alma mater, the University of Iowa). Fluency in ASL—along with the appropriate ideological disdain for the hearing majority ("hearies" in Deaf lingo)—is the chief marker of how Deaf one actually is. The most fluent ASL users of all, of course, are the fewer than 5 percent of deaf people who are children of deaf adults (CODAs, they call themselves) and thus have likely been exposed to ASL since birth, attended state deaf schools where they honed their skills, and gone to Gallaudet for college. These multigenerationally deaf people sometimes refer to themselves as True Deaf (hence the language in Ramirez's blog) or Deaf of Deaf and are at the apex of the Deaf social pyramid. Later learners, the Muggles of Deafness who may use ASL more haltingly or with "accents" that betray their non-native status, or who (worst of all, in the eyes of many Deaf activists) combine signing with voiced speech, rank somewhat lower. If deaf people are indeed an oppressed minority, they are the only oppressed minority with its own hereditary aristocracy.

The role of bloodlines and pedigree in defining Deafness, along with the relatively small number of deaf people in the United States to begin with, helps explain the unusually active and even incestuous part that Gallaudet alumni, deaf parents, and even supposedly neutral organizations such as the National Association of the Deaf played in the battle against Fernandes. Gallaudet alumnus Brendan Stern, for example, the founder of the anti-Fernandes blog Buck Naked Bison, was frequently seen on campus during the protest and is also the son of Gallaudet graduate and deaf-school administrator Ron Stern, a finalist for the Gallaudet presidency who was strongly favored by the protesters. Another contender for Fernandes's job was Rosalyn Rosen, director of the National Center on Deafness at California State University's Northridge campus and Fernandes's predecessor as provost at Gallaudet. Rosen's two children, Jeff Rosen and Suzy Rosen Singleton, both lawyers and "third generation deaf," as Jeff puts it, served as legal advisers for the demonstrators. Rosalyn Rosen and Ron Stern were favorites among deaf activists, because, as protest leader Ryan Commerson, a 2001 graduate of Gallaudet who is now a graduate student in Deaf Studies there, explained on the FSSA website, the two "share . . . the same vision of language as a human right"—code for promotion of ASL as the sole politically permissible mode of deaf communication. Rosalyn Rosen was also president of the National Association of the Deaf from 1990 to 1993. That

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organization issued at least seven position papers last fall supporting the protest and arguing against Fernandes's presidency.

Those who style themselves as Deaf can often seem obsessed with genealogy, and also with other deaf people's (as well as hearing people's) fluency in ASL. During the height of the Gallaudet protest last fall, Ridor Live, a blog operated by Gallaudet graduate Ricky Taylor, listed detailed analyses of the ASL abilities of every member of the university's board of trustees, some of whom are hearing. The Gallaudet board chair, Brenda Brueggemann, a deaf woman who heads the ASL department at Ohio State University, received a somewhat low rating from Taylor, possibly because she spoke the commencement speech she delivered at Gallaudet in 2006. Her home was picketed during the protest, and she had to call campus security to remove six Gallaudet students who invaded her Ohio State office accompanied by a guide dog and refused to leave. Brueggemann and another Gallaudet trustee, Arizona Republican Sen. John McCain, resigned from the board to protest Fernandes's ouster. (McCain wrote to Jordan: "I cannot in good conscience continue to serve the board after its decision to terminate her appointment, which I believe was unfair and not in the best interests of the University.") Brueggemann's predecessor, Celia May Baldwin, had resigned after the May protests.

Other recent Gallaudet alumni recall that in the student cafeteria, fluent ASL-users ate only with each other, relegating deaf and hard-of-hearing students with other communications styles to their own beta tables. Some deaf activists refer to English as their "second language" and attribute whatever problems they might have with English proficiency to that fact. Like black underclass youngsters who diss their more studious classmates as "acting white," some deaf activists denigrate deaf people who use eloquent English as unacceptably "hearing." Mike McConnell, a 1991 Gallaudet graduate and active in the nearly oxymoronic (given the bent of Deaf culture) Deaf Republicans, posted this email he received from a deaf activist on his blog Kokonut Pundits: "Deaf Republicans website is not written by deaf people. its language is too hearing and it is written by Republican party." Marlee Matlin, the deaf actress who won an Academy Award in 1986 for her performance in *Children of a Lesser God*, is a non-person among the Deaf because she sometimes uses her voice in acting roles. So is Heather Whitestone McCallum, who became the first deaf Miss America in 1995 but is not regarded by activists as a sufficiently proficient signer; she compounded the crime by getting a cochlear implant in 2002.

As for cochlear implants, they are perennial hate-objects among deaf activists, who argue that they are instruments devised by a conspiracy of hearing-world manufacturers, pediatricians, and audiologists to "fix" the deaf and thereby deny their full humanity. Some deaf people who can otherwise afford to do so refuse to provide the implants to their deaf children, while others have threatened, in a kind of joking retaliation, to have any hearing children born to them surgically deafened (so far, no one seems to have put this threat into practice). Granted, the implants are expensive, they do not work perfectly, and not all deaf people benefit from them. Still, the anti-cochlear rhetoric is distressingly shrill, with the words "Nazis" (with reference to hearing parents who have their children implanted) and "cultural genocide" tossed around indiscriminately. Even Matthew S. Moore, publisher of *Deaf Life* magazine and an otherwise unusually hearing-world-friendly deaf activist, had this to say about implants in an email: "When parents learn their baby is deaf, they sometimes feel that the child they knew has died, replaced by a stranger." To mothers and fathers who love their deaf children dearly and invest substantial time researching whether cochlear implants are best for them, such a characterization sounds cold. Nonetheless, it seems common for those immersed in Deaf culture to regard their own hearing parents as their worst enemies. One of the women in Liza Mundy's *Washington Post* story delivered a resentful tongue-lashing in ASL to her hearing father for having given her a speech-based education as a child—right in front of reporter Mundy.

Along with bloodlines and ASL proficiency ratings, another focus of Deaf activism has been to gain recognition of ASL not only as a legitimate language for instruction of the deaf (a battle long since won; Gallaudet, for example, is now officially "bilingual/bicultural," offering ASL-orientation classes for non-users, requiring the use of sign as a courtesy in all on-campus communication, and weighing ASL proficiency in tenure decisions for professors), but as the sole legitimate language for instruction of the deaf. Over the last two decades a protracted and bitter battle against "oralism"—efforts of any kind to teach deaf people to speak—and perceived "audism" (the Deaf version of racism, in which hearing is supposedly privileged over sign) has been waged on the campuses of the state deaf schools and at Gallaudet itself. The main bone of contention, fastened upon by the anti-Fernandes protesters last fall, is the philosophy currently prevailing at Gallaudet known as Total Communication: the idea that deaf students and their professors ought to be free to use whatever mode of communication mutually works best for them.

That sounds sensible enough—many deaf young people simply do not know ASL very well, because they grew up lip-reading and speaking at home, or because, as mem-

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bers of the 95 percent of deaf people born to hearing parents, they do not sign with the facility of the Deaf of Deaf. Furthermore, many students at Gallaudet are not even functionally deaf but simply hard of hearing—unable to perceive sound without a hearing aid (a category that encompasses 8 million Americans), and an increasing number of Gallaudet students have cochlear implants. Neither group really needs ASL. Indeed, the Gallaudet course catalogue, while enshrining ASL and encouraging all students to learn the language, promises at the same time to "respect the sign language style of every individual and use whatever is necessary to communicate in a given situation." Practically speaking, for many hearing professors, as well as for deaf professors who use their voices, that means teaching in spoken English while simultaneously signing, not in perfect ASL because the syntax is so different from that of English, but in what is called Pidgin Signed English, a rougher version of ASL that gets the point across but follows English word order. Practically speaking also, the Pidgin Sign compromise allows both fluent and novice ASL-users among students to understand their professors and participate in class. As Fernandes wrote in an email interview, "As [Gallaudet is] a federally funded university . . . I strongly believe that every deaf, hard of hearing or deaf-blind child in the United States, regardless of schooling, family background, language or communication choices . . . or other differences, has a rightful place at Gallaudet."

Therein lies the very kindling wood for the rage that burned against Fernandes—and ultimately Jordan—for months on end at Gallaudet. Although many students undoubtedly disliked her personally and found her haughty and uncompromising as an administrator, the ideology behind the anger flowed out of the palpable and blistering antagonism of deaf radicals toward the Total Communication philosophy and Pidgin Sign—not to mention Signed Exact English and Cued Speech (which they deem "artificial" languages). Deaf activists denounce simultaneous signing and speaking (which they call "Simultaneous Communication" or, more derisively, "SimCom") as audism, oralism, and disrespect for the linguistic purity of ASL. What the activists want is for their own definition of bilingual education to prevail on campus, which calls for never using English and ASL at the same time. Practically speaking, because it would be enormously expensive to hire an ASL interpreter to shadow every professor and administrator, such a policy would effectively ban all modes of communication besides ASL from the Gallaudet campus—which is exactly the point.

Student-protest leader Ryan Commerson wrote on the FSSA website in criticism of Gallaudet's current communication policy: "Gallaudet University is the Grand Audist of all audists." He also castigated I. King Jordan: "From his very first day in office, Irving has never once given any indication that he respects ASL. Such is apparent in his pervasive use of Simultaneous Communication as his mode of communication." Last fall, Commerson used the FSSA website to call for the resignation of all non-proficient ASL-users among Gallaudet's trustees and their replacement by "those who are fluent in ASL," presumably in order to ensure the appointment of a Deaf-activist president. Commerson, as it happens, was the editor of the yearbook that Fernandes confiscated in 2001; before returning to Gallaudet last fall, he went on an eight-day hunger strike to try to force the Michigan School for the Deaf, where he was teaching, to adopt an ASL-only policy.

Although it is technically against Gallaudet rules, many younger and more radical professors, including a substantial contingent of hearing professors, have already put Commerson's ASL-only recommendations into effect in their classrooms, causing consternation among students who are novices at ASL when their hearing professors refuse to use their voices to answer their questions. In a letter to the *Washington Post* after Fernandes's removal, Kathleen Wood, a hearing Gallaudet English professor who participated in the protest, labeled those students who objected to an ASL-only policy as "resisters," and stated that Gallaudet ought to be reserved for "users and seekers of Deaf culture and ASL skills." Other faculty members and students at Gallaudet have from time to time launched unofficial "turn off our voices" campaigns for classrooms, the library, the cafeteria, and other public places, aiming to encourage or intimidate their fellows into using only ASL.

The net effect of all this, especially Fernandes's termination, has undoubtedly been to make the well-entrenched deaf-activist contingent inside and outside Gallaudet feel better. However, many deaf and hard-of-hearing young people do not care to think of themselves as victims and are increasingly availing themselves of mainstream educational opportunities made accessible to them by anti-discrimination laws. (Indeed, several states are considering shutting down their now-poorly subscribed residential deaf schools, which alarms the activists who view the schools as incubators of Deaf culture.) This new generation has also grown up with technological innovation—whether cochlear implants or vastly improved hearing aids or an array of text-based computer interfaces—that blur the lines between the deaf and hearing worlds. They are simply voting with their feet not to join, or else to abandon quickly, what they must perceive as a

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bizarre, obsolete, and self-marginalizing campus culture at Gallaudet.

The 2005 Education Department report that called Gallaudet "ineffective" noted that enrollment has been drifting downward, from more than 2,000 students in 1999 to today's 1,800 or so (which means that every year it costs the U.S. government more per capita to educate a Gallaudet student), while the number of deaf and hard-of-hearing college students overall has remained stable. That means Gallaudet is gradually losing deaf market share as well as absolute numbers of students. Furthermore, the department estimated that Gallaudet is now the institution of choice for only 13 percent of U.S. deaf and hard-of-hearing high-school graduates who enroll in four-year colleges. The 42 percent graduation rate that Gallaudet reported to the Education Department sounds bad, but that figure, based on counting heads at graduation and comparing that total with the number of freshmen four years earlier, is actually vastly inflated; the real figure, based on analyzing actual cohorts of students, according to an email from Fernandes confirmed by Gallaudet, is more like 6 percent with a mere 28 percent managing to graduate within six years.

Lev Nisnevitch

Statue of Thomas Gallaudet and Alice Cogswell

The abysmal graduation rate, as well as Gallaudet's lackluster track record with post-college job placements (the latter has improved somewhat under an aggressive internship program promoted by Fernandes), signals a poorly qualified student body whose professors have low expectations of them. So fewer and fewer deaf high school students, let alone academically outstanding deaf high school students, even bother to send their SAT scores to Gallaudet, much less fill out an application. In 2002, 758 high school seniors applied to Gallaudet; by 2006, that number had shrunk to 539. Fernandes says that she and other administrators had been working to improve the university's appeal, tightening academic standards, setting up an honors program, and aggressively recruiting. Then the turmoil hit. The number of new Gallaudet students (freshmen and transfer students), which had reached a record 351 in the fall of 2005, fell to 281 in 2006, the first time in years it had sunk below 300. In addition, the university lost about 100 undergraduate and graduate students after the May 2006 demonstrations and another 235 after the fall disruptions.

Scrambling to satisfy an accreditation board already dissatisfied with Gallaudet's performance and an Education Department wondering whether the university's subsidy funds would be better spent elsewhere, Davila promises to do more standards-raising, more recruiting, more niche-marketing of Gallaudet's unique support services and deaf-centric teaching styles. He also promises to try to bring peace to the fractured campus—a move that some observers say he promptly undermined by awarding amnesty from university discipline for all the protesters and promoting several faculty members and administrators associated with the Faculty, Staff, Students and Alumni group to top positions, including Richard Lytle, the FSSA's media liaison, who is now one of Davila's special assistants. Some critics are openly skeptical about Gallaudet's future.

"I see Gallaudet's becoming history," says Jack Slutzky, a retired graphic-design professor at the National Technical Institute with a deaf son who has excoriated, online and elsewhere, the self-isolating, inward-turning stance of Deaf-culture advocates (a few years ago Slutzky wrote a newspaper op-ed comparing ASL to Ebonics). Strolling through Gallaudet's pristine and architecturally charming campus, all signs of the recent sixties-retro strife erased by a vigilant landscaping staff, one hopes that he is wrong. One campus landmark is a striking bronze *fin-de-siècle* sculpture of Thomas Gallaudet and Alice Cogswell, the 9-year-old deaf daughter of a neighbor to whom Gallaudet painstakingly taught sign language in 1814—in a form of which today's deaf activists would disapprove. This politically incorrect hearing man of nearly two centuries ago and the adoring little deaf girl so equally politically incorrect—what an apt symbol of all that the university founded in Thomas Gallaudet's name has turned against. ♦

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Time Present, *Time* Past

Reinventing Ronald Reagan

By Noemie Emery

Ronald Reagan is weeping. There, on the cover of the March 26 *Time* magazine, under the headline "How the Right Went Wrong," we see the old lion, a tear rolling out of his eye and snaking down sadly over the contours of his aging, but still good-looking, once-was-a-movie-star face. And what is he mourning? The state of his party, lapsed from the peaks to which he had lifted it, and sunk in the depths of despair. "These are gloomy and uncertain days for conservatives," writes Karen Tumulty, grimly. "Set adrift as it is, the right understandably feels anxious as it contemplates who will carry Reagan's mantle into November 2008. . . . The principles that propelled the movement have either run their course, or run aground, or been abandoned by Reagan's legatees." Reagan by contrast looms as a beacon of purpose and clarity, a statesman of genuine vision and character, dwarfing the pygmies who have frittered away his inheritance. A tone of nostalgia runs through the story: They don't make them like him anymore, more's the pity, and certainly not in the Gipper's old party. Ah, for the old days, when there were giants among us. Where have you gone, Joe DiMaggio? And where are you, Ron?

So *Time* says now, in 2007, 18 years after Reagan left office, and three years after he died, aged 93, and recognized widely as one of his country's great leaders.

But what did it say when Reagan was president, and at the same stage in his tenure—a tough time for two-termers since Theodore Roosevelt—that George W. Bush is in his? Nothing good. A look at *Time*'s archive for 1987 shows a drumbeat of attack, if not of derision, for the man and his plans and ideas. True, the magazine did have a column by the late Hugh Sidey, a centrist's centrist if ever there was one and a man with an institutional fondness for presidents. He cut the old man a break every few issues. But on the whole, in a long series of fairly long stories, some of them featured on the cover, the magazine made room for a series of writers—Garry Wills, Lance Morrow, and George J. Church among them—to whipsaw the Gipper back, forth, and sideways as a poseur, a fraud, an out-of-touch airhead, a lame duck, a loser, a man dwelling in dreamland, a man whirled about by the currents around him, and, of course, wholly washed up. It had been a bad year for Reagan and Republicans, bracketed by the Iran-contra scandal and the stock market crash. Reagan's foreign policy ventures in Latin America and vis-à-vis the Soviet Union seemed stalled. His nomination of Robert Bork to the Supreme Court had failed, and in November 1986 he had lost the Senate. As far as *Time* was concerned, the whole jig was up.

"What crashed was more than just the market," wrote Walter Isaacson in the November 2, 1987, issue. "It was the Reagan Illusion: the idea that there could be a defense build-up and tax cuts without a price, that the country could live beyond its means indefinitely. The initial Reagan years, with their aura of tinseled optimism, had restored the nation's tattered pride and the lost sense that leadership was possible in the presidency. But he stayed a term too long. As he shouted befuddled Hooverisms over the roar of his helicopter last week or doddered precariously through his press conference, Reagan appeared embarrassingly irrelevant to a reality that he could scarcely comprehend. Stripped of his ability to create economic illusions, stripped of his chance to play host to Mikhail Gorbachev, he elicited the unnerving suspicion that he was an emperor with no clothes."

Another piece in that same issue piled on: "The stock-

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market plunge only magnified his new aura of ineffectiveness." The announcement that a Washington summit had been called off by Mikhail Gorbachev (it would be back on within weeks) "was a devastating political blow for Reagan, all but ending his last, best hope for recovering from a string of setbacks that have left him, with 15 months remaining in his term, not just a lame duck, but a crippled one. One after another, his major goals for this fall have gone aglimmering: the appointment of Robert Bork to the Supreme Court, the hope to win renewed funding for the contras in Nicaragua, and his aim of pushing through a budget plan that would protect defense spending without raising existing taxes or imposing new ones."

Even before the crash, the magazine was ringing with warnings that the whole Reagan era had been a mistake. "Ronald Reagan did not build a structure; he cast a spell," wrote Garry Wills in the March 9, 1987, issue. "There was no Reagan revolution, just a Reagan bedazzlement. The magic is going off almost as mysteriously as the spell was woven in the first place. There is no edifice of policies solid enough to tumble down piece by piece, its props being knocked out singly or in groups. The whole thing is not falling down; it was never weighty enough for that" in the first place. It was "simply evanescing," as befitted a fantasy. "Aides defended the Reagan fairy tales; editors treated his errors with restraint; the public punished those who were too critical of his whoppers. It was a vast communal exercise in make-believe."

"Is he more out of touch than ever?" asked George J. Church on January 26, 1987. "'Brain Dead,' the title of an article in the *New Republic*, referred to the lack of new ideas within the Reagan administration . . . but carried a not-very-subtle implication about the president as well. A story in the *Washington Post* reported that chief of staff Donald Regan had formed the administration's position on federal pay raises with only 'minimal' involvement from the President, and one in the *New York Times* described how congressional leaders had come away from meetings with Reagan wondering 'if he had understood the issues they had raised.'"

"Who's in Charge?" asked Lance Morrow in *Time*'s November 9, 1987, issue. "Reagan's tepid and grudging reactions—reluctant and uncomprehending—confirmed a suspicion in many minds that Reagan, a lame duck with 15 months to go in his second term, was presiding over an administration bereft of ideas and energy. . . . The President seemed bizarrely disengaged." He seemed in fact just like Willy Loman, in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, who rode a smile and shoeshine into utter oblivion. "Reagan seems to invite the thought that he has found a new model, the Salesman, in the last act, standing on a stage about to go dark."

Judging from all this, the right had little to go wrong from in the first place, the Reagan Legacy seems hardly worth claiming, and the charges brought by *Time* against current conservatives eerily echo those brought by *Time* against Reagan himself. "The Iraq war has challenged the conservative movement's custodianship of America's place in the world, as well as its claim to competence," writes Tumulty. "After 9/11, Bush found his own evil empire . . . but he hasn't produced Reagan's results." But according to *Time*, Reagan hadn't produced Reagan's results, either. In 1987, talks had broken down with the Soviet Union, whose regime seemed likely to endure for decades; Reagan was consumed with wrongheaded adventures in Central America, where the Sandinistas seemed likely to rule Nicaragua for years, and the civil war in El Salvador was still going on.

"Then there are the scandals and the corruption," Tumulty now tells us. "The dismay that voters expressed in last fall's midterm election was aimed not so much at conservatism as at the GOP's failure to honor it with a respect for law and order." A falloff from Reagan? Not quite. "His administration, from its very beginning, has been riddled from top to bottom with allegations of impropriety and corruption," wrote *Time*'s Richard Stengel the week of May 25, 1987. "More than 100 Reagan administration officials have faced allegations of questionable activities . . . many of the allegations were relatively minor, but the accumulation of cases produces a portrait of impropriety on a grand scale. . . . That number is without precedent. . . . The Reagan administration . . . appears to have suffered a breakdown of the immune system, opening the way to all kinds of ethical and moral infections. . . . While the Reagan administration's missteps may not have been as flagrant as the Teapot Dome scandal or as pernicious as Watergate, they seem more general, more pervasive, and somehow more ingrained."

Other complaints also bear out the old saying *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*—at least when it comes to the media's analysis of conservatives' alleged problems. The religious right is moving away in 2007 from the Republican party, but it was doing the same thing two decades ago. "Last week, with the Reagan presidency in deepened shadows," ran a *Time* report the week of November 16, 1987, "the house that Jerry [Falwell] built was entering a twilight of its own." (Twenty years later, twilight is still falling, but it has not yet become night.) In 2007, the conservative activist Richard Viguerie is complaining about Bush in Iraq; in 1987, Viguerie was complaining about Reagan in Central America. Then, as now, a powerless president was seen as on his way to the dumpster of history. In the November 23, 1987, issue, *Time* said that Reagan risked being added "to the list of 20th-century presidential failures," adding

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that his main problem was that few people liked his ideas. "By every measure, the nation, while embracing Reagan himself, has never fully embraced his brand of conservatism. It has liked him best when he adapted his views to the political mainstream." So how did Reagan come to embody for *Time* in 2007 the high-water mark of the conservative movement, when it was never liked much by the American people? Tumulty never explains.

A dim bulb, leading an unpopular movement, and presiding, ineptly, over a culture of avarice: To be fair to *Time*, it was hardly alone in this assessment of Reagan, which at the time was conventional wisdom, expressed in a number of markets and venues, by the establishment press. In the book *The Reagan Legacy*, a collection of essays published in 1988, David Ignatius of the *Washington Post* called Reagan's foreign policy an out-and-out failure, and said he was leaving a legacy of terrible problems for administrations to come. "Compared to the Reagan record of nonachievement, former President Jimmy Carter looked like a master diplomat," intoned the author. "Because he concentrated so much on image rather than substance, Reagan leaves behind an array of unresolved substantive problems. His successor will inherit a collection of outdated strategic premises, alliances that don't quite adhere, [and] roles and expectations for America that no longer hold." In the book *Landslide*, published the same year, Doyle McManus of the *Los Angeles Times* and Jane Mayer, now of the *New Yorker*, reiterated the *Time* view of Reagan as reality-challenged, fact-averse, and inert in the face of catastrophe: "Far from bequeathing a dominant Republican party to his successor, Reagan no longer commanded even the conservative coalition that had brought him into power. Right wing activists who had rejoiced at his elections now dismissed him as impotent and soft."

Tumulty says the Republicans today are facing defeat in 2008, with a demoralized base and an electorate eager to change horses in Washington. According to McManus and Mayer, they faced the very same prospect in 1988: "When GOP voters were asked if they would vote for Reagan, only 40 percent said yes." And through Reagan's two terms, the *New York Times*'s James Reston, arguably the era's most prominent establishment windbag, denounced the president unrelievedly as a showman and hypocrite who conned the American people into blithely supporting his inept and callous regime. It was on November 4, 1984, after Reagan had won his historic 49-state landslide, that Reston really unloaded, not only on how much he detested the president, but how much this feeling was shared by his peers:

> Among the losers in this Presidential election campaign you will have to include the nosy scribblers of the press. Not since the days of H.L. Mencken have so many reporters written so much or so well about the shortcomings of the President and influenced so few voters. . . . Some editorial writers and columnists and most Washington reporters were on to his evasive tactics, easy cheerfulness, and unsteady grasp of the facts. They did not hesitate to point out his deficits, personal and fiscal, condemn his windy theorizing, and mock his zigzag contortions, but Mr. Reagan had the photographers and television cameramen for allies and proved that one picture on the nightly news can be worth a million votes. . . . It is said that the people get the government they deserve, which is undoubtedly true, and also that what they see is what they get, which is not true. For the world of television is the world of illusion, and what they see and hear—all those promises of peace and prosperity—are precisely what they are not likely to get in the next four years.

Peace and prosperity, of course, were exactly what they would get from Reagan.

Which it took *Time* and the *Times* 20 years more to admit.

And how did an era of greed, led by an out-of-touch airhead, change two decades later into a golden age, led by a prince among men? The reasons are these: First, the only times conservatives are praised in the press is when they can be used to run down other conservatives; and second, it is a general rule of the press and of the establishment that the best conservatives are those dead or retired; and the more dead or retired, the better they are. As Jonah Goldberg noted this winter when Gerald Ford died, lauded by a media that had little good to say of him while he was president, each Republican president is a fool, a bigot, and a dangerous warmonger while he is in office, responsible for sexism, racism, ageism, and general misery. Once dead, however, he acquires a Strange New Respect. In time, the jibes thrown at him are airbrushed away, and he is seen as a statesman, a true conservative, with all the best values, all the more so when compared with whatever Republican is now in office, who is seen in comparison as someone who really is dangerous, a warmonger, bigot, and fool. In their turn, Barry Goldwater, Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, and George Bush the Elder have become harmless and loveable figures, cherished for their good humor, their prudence, and tolerance—and for their distance from today's modern conservatives, who have run their cause into the ground.

This pattern will not alter: In a few years, when President Rudy or Commander in Chief Thompson begins knocking heads, watch out for the press to express its Strange New Respect for Bush 43, whose government was nothing if not diverse as regards race and gender, and who at least made a pretense of being compassionate. In 2027, if *Time* is still around, will it run a cover, showing him shedding a tear?

Wherever Reagan is today, he is doubtless not crying. We like to think he is watching the horse race, with other ex-presidents. And laughing his head off at *Time*. ♦

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Defining Marriage Down . . .

is no way to save it

By David Blankenhorn

Does permitting same-sex marriage weaken marriage as a social institution? Or does extending to gay and lesbian couples the right to marry have little or no effect on marriage overall? Scholars and commentators have expended much effort trying in vain to wring proof of causation from the data—all the while ignoring the meaning of some simple correlations that the numbers do indubitably show.

Much of the disagreement among scholars centers on how to interpret trends in the Netherlands and Scandinavia. Stanley Kurtz has argued, in this magazine and elsewhere, that the adoption of gay marriage or same-sex civil unions in those countries has significantly weakened customary marriage, already eroded by easy divorce and stigma-free cohabitation.

William Eskridge, a Yale Law School professor, and Darren R. Spedale, an attorney, beg to differ. In *Gay Marriage: For Better or for Worse?*, a book-length reply to Kurtz, they insist that Kurtz does not prove that gay marriage is causing anything in those nations; that Nordic marriage overall appears to be healthier than Kurtz allows; and that even if marriage *is* declining in that part of the world, "the question remains whether that phenomenon is a lamentable development."

Eskridge and Spedale want it both ways. For them, there is no proof that marriage has weakened, but if there were it wouldn't be a problem. For people who care about marriage, this perspective inspires no confidence. Eskridge and Spedale do score one important point, however. Neither Kurtz nor anyone else can scientifically prove that allowing gay marriage *causes* the institution of marriage to get weaker. Correlation does not imply causation. The relation between two correlated phenomena may be causal, or it may be random, or it may reflect some deeper cause producing both. Even if you could show that every last person in North Carolina eats barbecue, you would not have established that eating barbecue is a result of taking up residence in North Carolina.

When it comes to the health of marriage as an institution and the legal status of same-sex unions, there is much to be gained from giving up the search for causation and studying some recurring patterns in the data, as I did for my book *The Future of Marriage*. It turns out that certain clusters of beliefs about and attitudes toward marriage consistently correlate with certain institutional arrangements. The correlations crop up in a large number of countries and recur in data drawn from different surveys of opinion.

Take the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), a collaborative effort of universities in over 40 countries. It interviewed about 50,000 adults in 35 countries in 2002. What is useful for our purposes is that respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with six statements that directly relate to marriage as an institution:

1. Married people are generally happier than unmarried people.
2. People who want children ought to get married.
3. One parent can bring up a child as well as two parents together.
4. It is all right for a couple to live together without intending to get married.
5. Divorce is usually the best solution when a couple can't seem to work out their marriage problems.
6. The main purpose of marriage these days is to have children.

Let's stipulate that for statements one, two, and six, an "agree" answer indicates support for traditional marriage as an authoritative institution. Similarly, for statements three, four, and five, let's stipulate that agreement indicates a lack of support, or less support, for traditional marriage.

Then divide the countries surveyed into four catego-

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ries: those that permit same-sex marriage; those that permit same-sex civil unions (but not same-sex marriage); those in which some regions permit same-sex marriage; and those that do not legally recognize same-sex unions.

The correlations are strong. Support for marriage is by far the weakest in countries with same-sex marriage. The countries with marriage-like civil unions show significantly more support for marriage. The two countries with only regional recognition of gay marriage (Australia and the United States) do better still on these support-for-marriage measurements, and those without either gay marriage or marriage-like civil unions do best of all.

In some instances, the differences are quite large. For example, people in nations with gay marriage are less than half as likely as people in nations without gay unions to say that married people are happier. Perhaps most important, they are significantly less likely to say that people who want children ought to get married (38 percent vs. 60 percent). They are also significantly more likely to say that cohabiting without intending to marry is all right (83 percent vs. 50 percent), and are somewhat more likely to say that divorce is usually the best solution to marital problems. Respondents in the countries with gay marriage are significantly more likely than those in Australia and the United States to say that divorce is usually the best solution.

After all, the big idea is not to stop gay marriage. The big idea is to stop the erosion of society's most pro-child institution.

A similar exercise using data from a different survey yields similar results. The World Values Survey, based in Stockholm, Sweden, periodically interviews nationally representative samples of the publics of some 80 countries on six continents—over 100,000 people in all—on a range of issues. It contains three statements directly related to marriage as an institution:

1. A child needs a home with both a father and a mother to grow up happily.

2. It is all right for a woman to want a child but not a stable relationship with a man.

3. Marriage is an outdated institution.

Again grouping the countries according to the legal status of same-sex unions, the data from the 1999-2001 wave of interviews yield a clear pattern. Support for marriage as an institution is weakest in those countries with same-sex marriage. Countries with same-sex civil unions show more support, and countries with regional recognition show still more. By significant margins, support for marriage is highest in countries that extend no legal recognition to same-sex unions.

So what of it? Granted that these correlations may or may not reflect causation, what exactly can be said about the fact that certain values and attitudes and legal arrangements tend to cluster?

Here's an analogy. Find some teenagers who smoke, and you can confidently predict that they are more likely to drink than their nonsmoking peers. Why? Because teen smoking and drinking tend to hang together. What's more, teens who engage in either of these activities are also more likely than nonsmokers or nondrinkers to engage in other risky behaviors, such as skipping school, getting insufficient sleep, and forming friendships with peers who get into trouble.

Because these behaviors correlate and tend to reinforce one another, it is virtually impossible for the researcher to pull out any one from the cluster and determine that it alone is causing or is likely to cause some personal or (even harder to measure) social result. All that can be said for sure is that these things go together. To the degree possible, parents hope that their children can avoid all of them, the entire syndrome—drinking, smoking, skipping school, missing sleep, and making friends with other children who get into trouble—in part because each of them increases exposure to the others.

It's the same with marriage. Certain trends in values and attitudes tend to cluster with each other and with certain trends in behavior. A rise in unwed childbearing goes hand in hand with a weakening of the belief that people who want to have children should get married. High divorce rates are encountered where the belief in marital permanence is low. More one-parent homes are found where the belief that children need both a father and a mother is weaker. A rise in nonmarital cohabitation is linked at least partly to the belief that marriage as an institution is outmoded. The legal endorsement of gay marriage occurs where the belief prevails that marriage itself should be redefined as a private personal relationship. And all of these marriage-weakening attitudes and behaviors are linked. Around the world, the surveys show, these things go together.

Eskridge and Spedale are right. We cannot demonstrate statistically what exactly causes what, or what is likely to have what consequences in the future. But we do see in country after country that these phenomena form a pattern that recurs. They are mutually reinforcing. Socially, an advance for any of them is likely to be an advance for all of them. An individual who tends to accept any one or two of them probably accepts the others as well.

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And as a political and strategic matter, anyone who is fighting for any one of them should—almost certainly already does—support all of them, since a victory for any of them clearly coincides with the advance of the others. Which is why, for example, people who have devoted much of their professional lives to attacking marriage as an institution almost always favor gay marriage. These things do go together.

Inevitably, the pattern discernible in the statistics is borne out in the statements of the activists. Many of those who most vigorously champion same-sex marriage say that they do so precisely in the hope of dethroning once and for all the traditional "conjugal institution."

That phrase comes from Judith Stacey, professor of sociology at New York University and a major expert witness testifying in courts and elsewhere for gay marriage. She views the fight for same-sex marriage as the "vanguard site" for rebuilding family forms. The author of journal articles like "Good Riddance to 'The Family,'" she argues forthrightly that "if we begin to value the meaning and quality of intimate bonds over their customary forms, there are few limits to the kinds of marriage and kinship patterns people might wish to devise."

Similarly, David L. Chambers, a law professor at the University of Michigan widely published on family issues, favors gay marriage for itself but also because it would likely "make society receptive to the further evolution of the law." What kind of evolution? He writes, "If the deeply entrenched paradigm we are challenging is the romantically linked man-woman couple, we should respect the similar claims made against the hegemony of the two-person unit and against the romantic foundations of marriage."

Examples could be multiplied—the recently deceased Ellen Willis, professor of journalism at NYU and head of its Center for Cultural Reporting and Criticism, expressed the hope that gay marriage would "introduce an implicit revolt against the institution into its very heart, further promoting the democratization and secularization of personal and sexual life"—but they can only illustrate the point already established by the large-scale international comparisons: Empirically speaking, gay marriage goes along with the erosion, not the shoring up, of the institution of marriage.

These facts have two implications. First, to the degree that it makes any sense to oppose gay marriage, it makes sense only if one also opposes with equal clarity and intensity the other main trends pushing our society toward postinstitutional marriage. After all, the big idea is not to stop gay marriage. The big idea is to stop the erosion of society's most pro-child institution. Gay marriage is only one facet of the larger threat to the institution.

Similarly, it's time to recognize that the beliefs about marriage that correlate with the push for gay marriage do not exist in splendid isolation, unrelated to marriage's overall institutional prospects. Nor do those values have anything to do with strengthening the institution, notwithstanding the much-publicized but undocumented claims to the contrary from those making the "conservative case" for gay marriage.

Instead, the deep logic of same-sex marriage is clearly consistent with what scholars call deinstitutionalization—the overturning or weakening of all of the customary forms of marriage, and the dramatic shrinking of marriage's public meaning and institutional authority. Does deinstitutionalization necessarily require gay marriage? Apparently not. For decades heterosexuals have been doing a fine job on that front all by themselves. But gay marriage clearly presupposes and reinforces deinstitutionalization.

By itself, the "conservative case" for gay marriage might be attractive. It would be gratifying to extend the benefits of marriage to same-sex couples—*if* gay marriage and marriage renewal somehow fit together. But they do not. As individuals and as a society, we can strive to maintain and strengthen marriage as a primary social institution and society's best welfare plan for children (some would say for men and women too). Or we can strive to implement same-sex marriage. But unless we are prepared to tear down with one hand what we are building up with the other, we cannot do both. ♦

"General Petraeus has written an open letter to the members of Multinational Forces Iraq, and there's a lot to like in this letter—liberal rules of engagement, a more aggressive strategy both for fighting insurgents and helping civilians rebuild. And the idea that the troops 'can't commute to the fight in counterinsurgency operations' strikes me as a rebuke to the Democrats' call for 'strategic redeployment.'"

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China Doll

Madame Chiang and her times

BY CHRISTINE ROSEN

Time Life Pictures / Getty Images / Carl Mydans

The Generalissimo and the Missus, 1941

An intelligent and outspoken young woman enrolls at Wellesley College, where she impresses her classmates with her ambition and annoys a few with her outsized sense of entitlement. After graduation, she marries a rising political figure who eventually becomes a national leader. She, too, is soon wielding power behind the scenes, and eventually her husband puts her in charge of a new national program, making her a more visible public figure but also a target for critics who resent her unaccountability when the program proves an embarrassing failure. Beloved by some and reviled by others, she always insists that her goal is to promote democracy, even though she is also clearly perfecting the art of promoting herself. When her husband's embattled tenure comes to an end, she quickly reinvents herself as a political figure in her own right.

This is not the life of Hillary Rodham Clinton. It is that of Mayling Soong, better known by her married name, Madame Chiang Kai-Shek. Powerful women are often unlucky in their biographers, but in her engaging book, *Madame Chiang Kai-Shek: China's Eternal First Lady*, Laura Tyson Li ably describes the life of this indomitable little woman who "was a seamless alloy of Southern belle, New England bluestocking, and Chinese *tai-tai*, or matron." Born in 1897, Madame Chiang Kai-Shek died in comfortable exile in New York at the age of 105, having witnessed two world wars and countless years of civil strife in her Chinese homeland.

Madame Chiang Kai-Shek
China's Eternal First Lady
by Laura Tyson Li
Atlantic Monthly, 576 pp., $30

Although she has been called "China's Eternal First Lady," in many ways Mayling Soong's life was more Western than Eastern. Her father, Charles Soong, spent many years in the United States and studied theology at Vanderbilt. A convert to Christianity and enthusiastic singer, he taught his children hymns as well as Stephen Foster ballads and the popular minstrel

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tune "I Wish I Was in Dixie." The family even tooled around Shanghai in a Buick. In the 1890s, as a prospering businessman, Charles became close to Sun Yat-sen, and was soon avidly promoting Sun's "Three Principles of the People," which Sun claimed was inspired by the Gettysburg Address. Soong also helped finance Sun's revolution.

As Li notes, the Soongs were "an anomaly" in Shanghai in that "they treated their daughters and sons the same" and insisted on educating all of their children. Mayling and her sisters attended schools run by Christian missionaries in Shanghai. Of the larger missionary impulse to China, Li writes, a touch hyperbolically, "With a zeal befitting the original Crusaders, the dream of bringing China into the fold of Christendom became an American crusade that amounted to cultural and spiritual aggression." Yet it was the dedication of these missionaries that enabled Mayling to become proficient in English and to receive an education when her less fortunate female peers were having their feet bound and their fates determined by their more traditional families.

When she reached adolescence, Mayling's parents sent her and her older sister, Ching Ling, to the United States, where they attended the Wesleyan school in Macon, Georgia. Mayling then moved on to Wellesley where, in 1913, she began her freshman year. Li notes that Mayling was unimpressed with the Wellesley campus and told the registrar, in a breezy Southern accent, "Well, I reckon I shan't stay 'round here much longer." By the time she graduated in 1917, however, Mayling felt so at ease in America that, she told a friend, "The only thing oriental about me is my face."

The Soong sisters were an earlier, Chinese version of the fabled Mitford girls in England. As Li describes, "her eldest sister, Eling, the Chinese said, loved money; middle sister Ching Ling loved China; and Mayling, the youngest, loved power." Ching Ling, with whom Mayling was intensely competitive, shocked her family by running off to marry her father's friend Sun Yat-sen in 1915; Sun Yat-sen died in 1925, making Ching Ling a revered revolutionary widow and, eventually, an uncompromising critic of her sister Mayling.

After returning to her family in Shanghai, Mayling also embarked on the search for a suitable mate. "The profession of marriage is the one most important profession for every woman," Mayling wrote, "and one not to be subordinated by any other profession or inspiration." By 1926, she was being courted by Chiang Kai-Shek, a protégé of Sun's, who had recently gained control of Sun's Nationalist (Kuomintang) party and begun referring to himself as Generalissimo. As a youth, Chiang was "emotionally unstable," Li notes, and as an adult continued to display a "fiery temper." He also seemed unconcerned about the propriety of courting Mayling while still married to his second wife, Jennie Chen, whom he hustled off to San Francisco and later claimed was merely one of his recently released concubines.

Mayling and Chiang were married in 1927. In a preview of the promotional skills for which Mayling would soon become well known, she arranged for a film of the wedding to be made and shown in theaters across China. When news of the marriage reached Jennie Chen in New York City, she tried unsuccessfully to commit suicide by hurling herself into the Hudson River.

It is telling that Mayling described marriage as a profession: She viewed her own as one, and she found in Chiang's vision for China an outlet for her own energies. "Here was my opportunity," she wrote. "With my husband, I would work ceaselessly to make China strong." Like many consorts of powerful men, Madame Chiang Kai-Shek ascended through a combination of family money and connections; shrewd and uncompromising personal judgment; and an ongoing ability to influence and control her husband (whom she converted to Christianity not long after their marriage). In public the generalissimo was a parody of uxoriousness; in private, relations between the couple were often prickly. Some historians have speculated that their childless union was also largely platonic.

By the 1930s, Chiang's Kuomintang party was in power but faced escalating challenges to its authority from a growing Communist movement and an aggressive Japan, as well as a barrage of criticism from Ching Ling about the rampant corruption and misguided rule of the Nationalists. Madame's solution, announced in 1934, was the New Life Movement, which Li describes as "a curious East-West ideological fusion of neo-Confucian precepts, thinly disguised New Testament Christianity, YMCA-style social activism, elements of Bushido—the samurai code—and European fascism, along with a generous dose of New England Puritanism." Not surprisingly, the New Life Movement was not a rousing success with the Chinese people, who were displeased to learn that mah-jongg, opium smoking, dancing, and public displays of affection were now forbidden. Li judges the movement a "paternalistic state-sponsored cult" that attempted to "shame [the Chinese people] into modernity," which seems like a fair assessment.

Mayling's presence on the international stage, and her popularity in America, increased significantly in the 1940s, thanks in large part to the puffery of writers like Clare Boothe Luce, who called Madame the "greatest living woman" in an issue of *Time* in 1942. In 1943, during a lengthy trip to the United States, Mayling became the first Asian (and the second woman) to address Congress. With her usual flair for dramatic presentation, she toddled into the Senate in four-inch high heels, wearing a black Chinese dress lined in red and a sequined turban, which she doffed with a dazzling smile at the beginning of her speech. "Grizzled congressmen were putty in her hands," writes Li.

Others were not so charmed. Winston Churchill deemed the Chiangs "mischievous and ignorant" when they attempted to meddle in colonial affairs in India. And Franklin Roosevelt lost patience with Madame's indefatigable

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efforts to gain American aid for China's battle with Japan. During one of Mayling's visits to the United States, an American newspaper ran an editorial cartoon that depicted a sultry and aggressive little Madame vamping Uncle Sam, who was desperately trying to guard a large safe.

"Little Sister," as Madame was often called, also had a libidinous side. In 1942, FDR sent his 1940 presidential opponent Wendell Willkie on a goodwill tour with stops in Asia. After meeting Madame Chiang, Willkie declared she was the "most charming woman [he] ever met." The feeling was evidently mutual; Willkie later boasted to friends about his "amorous conquest" of Madame Chiang. Madame's romantic feelings about Willkie were hardly girlish, however: She told a confidant that if Willkie were ever elected president, "then he and I would rule the world. I would rule the Orient and Wendell would rule the Western world."

By 1949, the Communists had taken Beijing and proclaimed the People's Republic of China; the Chiangs fled to Taiwan, where they established a quasi-dictatorship and continued to claim that they were the rightful leaders of China. As their hopes for regaining power faded, Madame became more rigid and uncompromising in her beliefs; she also became more outspokenly critical of Western governments for failing to stand up to the Chinese Communists. By the early 1970s, when Richard Nixon visited Beijing, the Chiangs' hopes for a restoration of a Nationalist government in China were permanently dashed. The generalissimo died in 1975.

Madame Chiang Kai-Shek spent her final years in New York in a palatial Upper East Side apartment she regularly described as "modest." A bevy of loyal retainers insulated her from the outside world, ferrying her to shopping trips at Saks Fifth Avenue or shows at Radio City Music Hall. Madame's lavish lifestyle, Li suggests persuasively, was funded in large part by money gleaned from Nationalist-controlled government accounts and decades of business cronyism. In her twilight years she was a living anachronism, feminism and communism having undermined her particular style of faux-naif politics.

Li, who is fluent in Mandarin and spent many years as a journalist in Asia, writes with clarity and insight about China's complicated political history. She exercises considerable restraint when judging Madame's motives, but in an astute assessment in the epilogue, she outlines the paradoxes of her personality: the decadence of her lifestyle compared with the extreme poverty of her countrymen; the outlandish sense of entitlement; the scheming, selfish narcissism that undermined her image of herself as a devoted, virtuous Christian wife. Li also notes that Madame Chiang was "at least an episodic if not a chronic substance abuser," addicted to sedatives and other medications that she used to treat the cyclical bouts of hives and other nervous ailments that plagued her.

In the end, she excelled at her profession: She was a dutiful wife who spent her life enhancing her husband's repressive and autocratic regime. That she did so in the name of democracy is yet another irony of history. ♦

Popular Government

How can the Constitution serve the public interest?

BY HERMAN BELZ

In this erudite, amiable, and provocative work, the political theorist Stephen Elkin presents a political rather than a juridical conception of American constitutionalism. Challenging the doctrine of judicial supremacy over constitutional meaning, Elkin advances "a theory of republican political constitution" based on the idea of deliberative lawmaking in the public interest.

Reconstructing the Commercial Republic
Constitutional Design after Madison
by Stephen L. Elkin
Chicago, 413 pp., $35

In Elkin's view, things are not well with the American republic. Sources of discontent include unequal distribution of income and wealth, decline in civic spirit and political participation, and middle class uneasiness caused by economic insecurity, cultural conflict, and the weakening of families. Institutional manifestations of republican decline are seen in judicial policy intervention, legislative preoccupation with interest-group bargaining, and executive government by administrative lawmaking. Although not yet a crisis, Elkin advises: "The present historical juncture may be the last time that Americans really do aspire to be a commercial republic."

Elkin departs from the conventional juridical focus of constitutional scholarship based on the text of the Constitution. Instead he adopts the Aristotelian concept of regime as his central organizing principle. A translation of the Greek word *politeia*, regime refers to the political order as a whole. It is the actual distribution of power in the community, rooted in a pattern of class rule and a conception of justice that legitimates the manner of political rule. In contrast to the legalistic modern idea of a written constitution, regime theory comprises institutions of polity, economy, and society altogether, signifying a political whole of interrelated parts having a distinct ethos.

Regime analysis has modern theorists, including James Madison. Princi-

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pal elements of the Madisonian regime include: rule of law defined as lawmaking through reasoned deliberation by a public body, commercial society based on private property, civil society consisting of private voluntary associations, public-spirited citizens, and political institutions resting on a foundation of self-interest "harnessed to a conception of justice consistent with the one held by the powerful social strata." According to Elkin, Madison envisioned a new kind of politics that would prevent factional rule and secure the public interest through the exercise of strong, active, and limited government.

The essential difficulty in actualizing the commercial republican regime, Elkin emphasizes, is posed by the "inevitable division between the propertied and the propertyless." In political terms, the republican problem is "how to get the propertied to serve in a government that would not be an exercise in class rule, while at the same time getting the propertyless to accept a regime that was not constructed with the express intent of alleviating their distress."

In Elkin's commercial republican constitution, aspiration to fulfill the public interest is the highest moral desideratum. Definition of the meaning of the public interest poses the deepest intellectual conundrum. Elkin states: "At the center of the regime would be a deliberative core capable of practical reasoning about the concrete meaning of the public interest." The public interest is not something to be categorially or specifically identified in terms of public goods or "transpolitical standards" deductively applied. The public interest is "substantive," and its "concrete meaning" can only be decided "in the context of actual efforts at lawmaking." At the same time, the public interest is "subjective," in the sense that opinions about its content will differ. But such disagreement, Elkin notes, has no bearing on whether the determination of the public interest is correct.

Because of their importance in creating the material prosperity that is a fundamental requirement in modern society, private property rights and economic liberty would appear to serve the public interest. In Elkin's theory, this is true only in an indirect and qualified sense. The key to understanding the public interest is reliance on deliberative practical reason. In contrast, commercial pursuits are private and self-regarding, hence unsuited for public lawmaking.

Deliberative reason is practical. It is concerned with serving moral and political values in the world, not with analyzing theories of law, morality, and economics in the manner of contemporary scholarship. One of Elkin's key points is that, in modern republicanism, practical reason appears in an institutional form rather than in the prudence and moral excellence of the statesman, as in classical political philosophy. The public interest depends on deliberative lawmaking, which involves the exercise of practical reasoning. Constitutional thinking for a republican regime, therefore, is "an exercise in practical political reason, the purpose of which is to secure an institutional design for the exercise of that reason."

In the name of practical reason, one might say, the conclusion follows that "the substance of the public interest is institutional." Practical reason thus becomes, in effect, a kind of constitutional law. Under the rule of deliberative lawmaking, that which serves the public interest presents itself as "constitutional"—if the notion of constitutionality remains valid—or at least politically right. It rests on "good arguments" and "good reasons" and is informed by "public-regarding motives."

Elkin underscores the "reflexive" character of the public interest. Deliberative lawmaking is "reflexive" in the sense that it "consists in looking in an expansive, regime-encompassing way at itself." The "right kind of politics" prompts lawmakers to act in a "reflexive fashion" to legislate in the public interest. Elkin comments: "A well-designed constitutional politics means that the public interest is regularly served. And since the public interest consists of creating and securing constitutive republican institutions, serving the public interest, in turn, means that such a politics would be strengthened."

There is a self-constituting sense of existential "becoming" in these observations that is remote from the philosophical foundations of the Founders. Institutions are always important, but the wisdom or good judgment of practical reason cannot be codified in fixed rules, much less systematized in a reflexive, cybernetic feedback mechanism.

It cannot be forgotten that economic self-interest is a necessary feature of a commercial republic. In the form of interest-group politics, however, as "a natural by-product of the workings of private-property-based markets," economic self-interest is unacceptable in deliberative lawmaking. The natural tendency for a commercial people "to see politics as an extension of economics," Elkin explains, must be overcome and corrected. Interest-group politics depends upon "bargaining," not "reasoning," as in public-interest politics: "The invasion by an aggregative politics of deliberative lawmaking is a danger to republican government." Factional in nature, it is "a corruption of the public sphere by private interest."

In order to be included in public-interest deliberation, therefore, the property interests of large-scale productive asset controllers must be broadened. Their inattention to the public interest is probably less a matter of intention than of ignorance, and "may be curable." The means of enlightenment, among other things, is redistribution of capital through reforms such as onetime "life" income grants. And the basis on which reforms can be actualized—the second fundamental point in Elkin's theory—is republican class politics centered on the ruling element in the regime, the middle class.

Elkin believes that the middle class, when mobilized by deliberative lawmakers and party leaders, is capable of political action in the public interest. He envisions "a secure and confident" middle class acting "as a kind of pivot moving between coalitions with asset controllers and with the have littles

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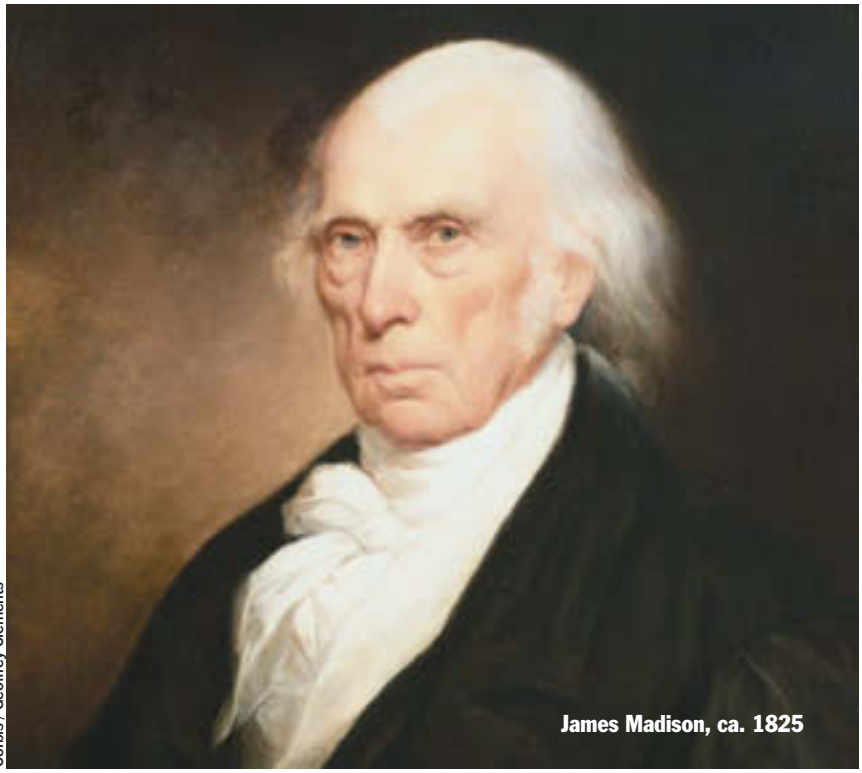
[sic]" of American society. The interest of the middle class will lead it to resist serious attack on property interests while opposing massive economic inequality and rejecting the claim that full employment at reasonable wages for all is neither possible nor desirable. The middle class, Elkin asserts, will "sense that it is only public government—government open to scrutiny, where reasoning carries the day—that can serve their interests."

Scornful of utopian idealists, Elkin writes as a realist. Given "the sort of beings we are," he states, "here are the conditions that must obtain if we are to have the politics we wish for." Modestly, he admits there is no simple way "to provide empirical backing" for the constitutional design he proposes. In thinking about good political practice, he advises, "we must look at actual citizens with their history, virtues and vices, and institutional inheritance."

For all its insight and learning, however, *Reconstructing the Commercial Republic* has a kind of abstract quality. Although not historically disembodied like John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice*, Elkin's account of contemporary government and politics might not be entirely recognizable to many observers. Elkin gives insufficient consideration to the cultural and moral transformation that has occurred under the shaping effect of the New Deal regulatory/welfare state and its liberal progeny that claim "mainstream" moral recognition. It is not obvious that middle-class mores, as presented here, are accurately represented in the class-based politics of the Democratic party, led by rich and well-educated "populists," and to which Elkin looks as the instrument of fully realized commercial republican aspiration.

Referring to American society, Elkin observes: "The bourgeois state contains inner contradictions and that is what it is all about." He also cautions that a political regime "cannot tolerate just any sort of contradiction, or at least unlimited contradiction." In America, the commercial part of the regime exists in tension with the republican part. Elkin the realist views economic self-interest as a regrettable necessity, a "medicine" to be taken "in a largely undiluted form." But the massive economic inequality caused by modern capitalism requires a different kind of remedy: namely, the moral enlightenment of private property interests by practical-reasoning deliberative lawmakers.


Corbis / Geoffrey Clements

James Madison, ca. 1825

Commerce cannot be eliminated, but it can be made to serve the public interest. The intelligence of well-calibrated and discerning republican class politics can lead controllers of productive assets to transcend narrow self-interest. At present, the market and private ownership work against republican government; "but once we more widely distribute wealth," Elkin asserts, "the wonders of compound interest and all other wealth-magnifying devices of an enterprise-based market system start to work in favor of republican government."

Given the superiority of deliberative reasoning to interest-bargaining, republican aspiration can be more fully realized by treating private property as a public interest. Although he does not put it so bluntly, this is the logic of Elkin's theory of deliberative lawmaking. The more public-spirited the citizenry becomes, the more political demands there are for control of private property rights. In Holman Jenkins's apt observation, the more successful the stock market is in cultivating strong businesses, the more we're told the whole system is rotten and in need of reform.

Elkin describes his position as one of "radical conservatism." His admiration and respect for the achievement of Madison and the Founders is clear. Moreover, the scholarship in this book is richly informed by close attention to the classic texts in Western political philosophy, including the writings of Machiavelli and Leo Strauss. It is Elkin's political sensibility, expressed in almost elegiac reference to the New Deal as the epitome of public-interest politics, that might be questioned. There is a kind of critical historical reason, neither theoretical nor practical in a strict sense, that helps to frame constitutional problems by disclosing deeper truths.

In this case, the point would be that the New Deal is over, its accomplishments duly recognized and its errors in the process of rectification within the framework of orthodox American constitutionalism. ♦

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Mother Tongue

There's a lot of history in the history of English.

BY JAMES SEATON

Once, lexicographers like Samuel Johnson, Noah Webster, and H.L. Mencken were not only researchers but also major cultural authorities, who were more than willing to use that authority not only to distinguish good word usage from bad but also to encourage clear thinking and, in the case of the first two, good morals.

Inventing English
A Portable History of the Language
by Seth Lerer
Columbia, 320 pp., $24.95

Somewhere in the 20th century, however, the academic study of language became less a humanistic enterprise than a social science. Linguists and dictionary-makers became convinced that their status as scientists depended on their refusal to make negative judgments about linguistic change of any kind. In "The Decline and Fall of English," Dwight Macdonald traced the shift to the influence of the theories of Otto Jespersen, who claimed "that change in language is not only natural but good." Macdonald, a political radical but a cultural conservative, took issue, arguing that it was the obligation of lexicographers "to make it tough for new words and usages to get into circulation so that the ones that survive will be the fittest."

This was important not only for the sake of efficient communication but also because overly rapid change in language leads to a loss of cultural memory. English, Macdonald reminded his readers, "is an aesthetic as well as practical means of communication. It is compounded of tradition and beauty and style and experience."

Seth Lerer, an academic linguist in good standing, has no theoretical objection to the ideas of the theorist he calls "the great Danish linguist Otto Jespersen," and his history of the language is not a narrative of "decline and fall." The very title *Inventing English* suggests that Lerer intends to celebrate language change, while the book's conclusion insists that, even though the pace of change may have quickened in recent times, "we should not see our language as debased," since the entire history of English is a "history of invention: of finding new words and new selves." His *Portable History of the Language* is, nevertheless, a work that both celebrates and continues the work of humanistic explorers of language like Johnson, Webster, and Mencken.

Lerer accurately observes that this "is less a history of English in the traditional sense than it is an episodic epic." One of the blessings of this approach is that the reader hears less about, for example, changes in vowel sounds carried on over centuries—though there is one chapter on "The Great Vowel Shift"—and much more about specific examples of the use of language by gifted "inventors," from Caedmon to Don DeLillo. Disagreeing with Macdonald's conclusions, Lerer nevertheless shares his interest in language as "an aesthetic as well as practical means of communication."

To convey the world of Old English, Lerer points out how the words of "Caedmon's Hymn" demonstrate the way in which the conception of God changed when expressed in the Anglo-Saxon vernacular rather than the Latin of the missionaries. Caedmon praises God for creating not only heaven and earth but also "*middungeard*," translated literally as "middle-yard," a realm not known in Latin theology but well known to the ancient Germans as "the place between the realm of the gods and the world of the dead." (Lerer suggests that J.R.R. Tolkien's "Middle-Earth" is a modern version.) The author of *Beowulf*—like Caedmon, engaged in using words in unfamiliar ways to reveal new conceptions—conveys the delight of language powerfully though indirectly: Beowulf's antagonist, the monster Grendel—for the poet "a *won-saeli wer*" ("a being empty of blessedness")—not only does not understand human language but is itself "capable only of cries," not articulate speech. Perhaps, suggests Lerer, that is why Grendel attacks Hrothgar's hall: Inside there are people enjoying "the sweet sound of the scop [singer]," a delight Grendel cannot share.

Lerer conveys the linguistic results of the Norman Conquest through both sociological observation and the analysis of poetry. Lerer reports Sir Walter Scott's observation that "the Anglo Saxon raised the food, whereas the Norman Frenchman ate it. Thus our words for animals remain Old English: sow, cow, calf, sheep, deer. Our words for meats are French: pork, beef, veal, mutton, venison." But Lerer also demonstrates how, in the opening lines of *The Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer could skillfully play off Norman French against Old English. The continental "*Zephirus*" blows "*with his sweete breeth*" over "*holt and heeth*"—an unmistakably English landscape. The same alliteration, reminiscent of Old English poetry among so many new words from the French, occurs as well in the last line of the opening, where it "reaffirms the Englishness of the experience" as it explains why the pilgrims are so eager to travel to the shrine of the saint: "*That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke*"—because he has helped them when they were sick.

Shakespeare could reach even farther afield in making use of the contrast between simple words from Old English and new words from elsewhere. In a brilliant analysis of Macbeth's soliloquy considering the killing

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Fina Art Photographics Library / Corbis

'Chaucer's Canterbury Pilgrims at the Tabard Inn' (1897) by Edward Corbould

of Duncan (Act One, Scene 7, Lines 1-7), Lerer notes that Macbeth at first refers to the deed in straightforward Saxon English: "If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well / If it were done quickly." But a deed such as the killing of a king by his subject and successor could not be simply "done when 'tis done," no matter how short and simple the words used to refer to it. As Macbeth broods, he characterizes the deed in a very different spirit, employing a word—"assassination"—whose root (Lerer reminds us) "comes originally from an Arabic term meaning a 'hashish eater.'"

In a historical note not without contemporary relevance, Lerer explains that "members of certain sects would get high on their hash before committing violent deeds, such as the public killing of a public figure." Macbeth's use of this exotic term—the word appears for the first time in English in this speech—testifies that, despite his best efforts to believe otherwise, the act will have consequences far beyond what he can foresee or control.

Another, later writer of the English Renaissance with a protagonist whose actions would also have untoward consequences likewise signals moral unease by the use of a foreign-sounding word. The landscape of Milton's Eden is a "lantskip," as in "so lovely seemed / That Lantskip." Pointing out that the word is from "the Dutch *landschap*, a technical term for the genre of painting natural scenery," Lerer suggests that Eden, even before Adam and Eve disobey, has "something about it that looks forward to the fall," something that suggests its abundance and peace are "seeming" rather than reality. For Lerer, this quality of the Miltonic Eden reveals something about "the expanding English lexicon and the character of the Renaissance vernacular"—it was a "new vocabulary" whose undeniable richness had not yet been fully absorbed into English.

Doctor Johnson attempted to sort out what words and phrases deserved to be accepted as proper English and which did not. Johnson remains the most impressive of those who attempted to organize and discipline the English language, but Lerer quotes Johnson's own recognition, after years of working on his *Dictionary*, that the task he had set himself was finally an impossible one: "No dictionary of a living tongue can ever be perfect, since while it is hastening to publication, some words are budding, and some falling away." And yet Johnson succeeded, not only by the cogency of his definitions but, perhaps even more, by the choice of his quotations in expressing a literary sensibility that still speaks to us today. In Johnson, Lerer remarks with approval, "lexicography had become a branch of aesthetics."

Johnson's American successor, Noah Webster, was not, like Johnson, a great writer himself, but Lerer demonstrates the impact of Webster's dictionary on authors from Frederick Douglass to Emily Dickinson. Webster's insistence on the intrinsic connection between morality and learning is convincingly verified when Douglass hears his master commenting that reading unfits a man for subjection: "If you teach him how to read, he'll want to know how to write, and this accomplished, he'll be running away with himself." Dickinson, like Douglass, read and reread Webster's dictionary. Her poem "Perhaps you think me stooping" relies on Webster's definition of *stooping* as "Bending the body forward" to make the connection between a Christ who "stooped until He touched the Grave" and a "love annealed of love" that could "bend as low as Death."

Lerer's chapter on African-American English is, fortunately, considerably more balanced than its title,

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"Ready for the Funk," suggests. Rightly refusing to anoint one sort of speech as more authentically black than another, Lerer notes the obvious but not always acknowledged truth that "there is no single strain of African-American English." Along with the strain associated with dialect, slang, and "funk," the strain that in popular culture is often simply identified with African-American English as a whole, Lerer also takes note of a second strain, "a history of impassioned public oratory and passionate prose and verse" that calls on "the arc of Shakespeare, Milton, and the Bible." Lerer quotes the oration of Homer Barbee in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* as an example of the second, and the narrator's return to his roots with the exclamation, "I yam what I am!" as an example of the first.

He could have cited in confirmation of the reach of the second strain Ellison's own eloquent tribute to his teachers in the then-segregated public schools of Oklahoma who "could make the language of Shakespeare and the King James version of the Bible resound within us in such ways that its majesty and beauty seemed as natural and as normal coming from one of our own as an inspired jazz improvisation or an eloquently sung spiritual."

H.L. Mencken, no flatterer of the common people, nevertheless argued in *The American Language* that the distinctively American slang he abundantly documented and obviously enjoyed was not evidence of the decline of culture in a democracy but the expression of a uniquely American way of looking at the world: "The American, from the beginning, has been the most ardent of recorded rhetoricians. His politics bristles with pungent epithets; his whole history has been bedizened with tall talk; his fundamental institutions rest far more upon brilliant phrases than logical ideas." Lerer comments that such a passage, itself full of "tall talk," nevertheless reveals Mencken "at his most lexicographical, most engaged with the line from Johnson to Webster."

Yet if Lerer shares Mencken's delight in characteristically American idioms, he also believes that the influence of the English past remains alive in the American present. His story ends in characteristic fashion by finding a continuity between Chaucer's General Prologue and the opening of Don DeLillo's postmodernist novel *Underworld*, whose depiction of "anonymous thousands" on their way to the Giants-Dodgers 1951 playoff game recalls for Lerer Chaucer's description of the "pilgrims *from every shires end* find[ing] their way to Becket's shrine."

Seth Lerer's "episodic epic," with its portrait of language as an unfixable, always-changing and growing enterprise constantly enriched by "inventors" both famous and unknown, seems to bear out F.A. Hayek's contention that "many of the greatest things man has achieved are the result not of consciously directed thought, and still less the product of a deliberately coordinated effort of many individuals, but of a process in which the individual plays a part which he can never fully understand." Well aware of the hostility to his thesis that the market was one of these "greatest things," Hayek pointed to the history of languages to demonstrate that the notion of an "order generated without design" was no illusion, since the fact that "language shows a definite order which is not the result of any conscious design can scarcely be questioned."

Inventing English praises the accomplishments of "inventors" whose individual ingenuity has served better than any planning committee in expanding and strengthening the language. Emphasizing the inevitable failure of those who attempt to organize and fix language by "conscious design," Lerer persuasively bears witness to the creativity of speakers and writers, famous and unknown, who in making use of English for their own purposes have broadened and deepened the resources of the language for the rest of us. In doing so, Lerer reveals that he is not only an academic linguist but, like Macdonald, Johnson, Webster, and Mencken, something more—in Evelyn Waugh's phrase, "an addict of that potent intoxicant, the English language." ♦

Switched-On Book

Is the Sony Reader the library of the future?

BY DAVID SKINNER

Advertisements for the Sony Reader, a hand-held device for perusing e-books, show pretty, natural settings where fans of literature might go and read away to their brain's content. The marketers of portable technology have long suggested a kind of objective correlative between the pleasure one takes in their products and the places they are used. So marking up spreadsheets on your laptop while reclining on a tropical beach is much more like reclining on a tropical beach than it is like marking up spreadsheets.

Readers should be less susceptible than others to such hidden persuasion. First, it's not as if books themselves aren't, for the most part, already portable. And second, location is usually irrelevant to the quality of one's reading experience. The new Mitch Albom is going to be just as awful to read on the subway as in a deck chair, feet up, overlooking the crystal waters of Lake Tahoe.

So the virtues of portability are being exaggerated, but the Sony Reader has other selling points; above all, its

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Courtesy of Sony

'More reading . . . fewer books'

potential to reduce the clutter of books. For me, the perfect advertisement for this device would be a picture of my bedstand without its ever-present leaning tower of literature. More reading, the tagline would say, fewer books.

The Reader, which I have been test-driving for a couple of weeks, makes clear that books are becoming less necessary to a life of reading pleasure. It also makes clear that the gadget-makers have a ways to go in fine-tuning their product. And they know it.

The Reader currently sells for $350, literature not included. At 7" by 5" it's close to the size of a smallish paperback. Slim and light, it's much easier to carry or pack than a hardback. Its screen alone earns Sony bragging rights. Unlike a computer monitor with its backlighting, uncertain depth, and poor resolution, Sony's E Ink display scans almost as well as ink on paper. It requires outside lighting just as paper text does—which means it offers nothing new to readers in bed positioned next to a sleeping body—but reading an entire novel on it presented no unusual problems. And the style of literature matters less than you might think. In separate sessions, both lasting several hours, the long, embroidered sentences of Jonathan Swift were as easy to take in as the hammer-and-nail prose of Elmore Leonard.

Still, the Reader's shortcomings prove that whatever stage of development it represents, it is not to literature what the iPod is to music. Pages can be marked to help you find your way back to a passage, and the "continue reading" function returns you to the page reached before the device was last turned off. But pages cannot be marked with marginalia, a common enough practice with books that one hopes—or perhaps the verb "to dream" would be better here—that Sony is trying to figure how to make something like it possible with the Reader.

Also, maneuverability within books and within the Reader is limited. Text is not searchable. Flipping through several pages in a row is a small ordeal. A row of small buttons beneath the screen allows you to choose items from a central menu. Unfortunately, the buttons, like the Reader's small mouse-type pointer, are awkward and hard to use. The buttons can help you shift through a long text but do not correspond to obvious reference points like chapter openings, and the selection system is slow to respond.

The Reader also plays audio files, and well—but not as well as an iPod. And the Reader can store and show pictures, though only in grainy black and white. You can purchase graphic novels from the online Sony Connect Store, but displayed on the screen, their images will remind you of art-section reviews in which fine art is dressed down in cheap newsprint.

To be read, e-book files must first be downloaded onto a PC. The Reader is not compatible with Macs, another major shortcoming. Software is provided to help organize all of your files and move them on and off the Reader. As for purchasing reading material, the Sony Connect Store website sells both novels and nonfiction, but it offers only spotty coverage of new and old titles.

Thinking I would test the Reader by simply buying digital copies of the four or five books I am currently in the middle of (including two recent *New York Times* "notables," so nothing too obscure), I realized that none of these was available from the Connect Store. Browsing within genres reveals many bare spots. For instance, this may be the only bookstore without an Abraham Lincoln biography. Fans of cutting-edge fiction will not find Dave Eggers or Jonathan Safran Foer, but they will find Jonathan Lethem. Philip Roth, no. John Updike, yes. The great period in Russian literature is well represented, though I could not find Nikolai Gogol's *Diary of a Madman*. I was only partly consoled to find the Sony Connect Store stocked many other "Diaries," including those of "A Working Girl," "A Married Call Girl,"

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"A Teenage Stud," and so on. Prices varied, but many e-books were selling for under 10 bucks.

There are other e-book sellers. Ebooks.com has several times as many books for sale, but does not offer them in a format usable on the Reader. Amazon.com, too, sells e-docs and e-books, but these are also a no-go. The Sony Reader accepts PDFs, and there are loads of worthy texts available in PDF on the Internet, but they are generally formatted for 8.5" x 11" paper, so when shrunk onto the screen of the Reader the words are too small to read.

For classics buffs with a Sony Reader, the goldmine of e-literature is manybooks.net, where copyright-expired works (those published before 1923 along with some others) are available free and in Sony format. So are many of the canonical texts of Western literature, including many in foreign languages, and much else besides, all of it gratis.

In a brief phone interview, Sony vice president Ron Hawkins said that within a year the number of titles available in the Sony Connect Store will more than double. "We recognize that a significant multiple of content is required." Also, he said, eventually e-books for the Reader would be sold by other retailers, and Sony was already talking with a handful of potential distributors. The company's current business plan assumes that "multiple other retailers" will be involved. They are also looking at potential improvements to the Reader's software and hardware.

None of which yet saves the faithful reader from the clutter of his books. If, today, I threw out all the books in my house that could be uploaded for free onto a Sony Reader, at least one of my bookcases (out of five or six) could be retired. What I'd really like is to keep only as many books as could be squeezed into one or two bookcases.

The Sony Reader may not be the hottest thing going in the world of hand-held technologies, but it may yet gain some heat. For now, it is certainly a step in the right direction for those who love the written word more than they do the endless stacks of paper and ink. ♦

Men of Property

Why a hotel on Boardwalk beats a house on Marvin Gardens. **BY ERIN MONTGOMERY**

As you may remember from last Christmas season, diehard "gamers" were lining up outside electronics stores for the coveted Sony PlayStation 3, the very latest in video game technology. There were media images of (mostly disheveled) teenage boys sleeping in tents and grilling hot dogs for sustenance while waiting in line to fork over $600 for their very own console. Similar lines formed for the Nintendo Wii, a less expensive, though no less state-of-the-art, product.

Monopoly
The World's Most Famous Game—And How It Got That Way
by Philip E. Orbanes
Da Capo, 288 pp., $26

Such images prompt this question: Whatever happened to the good old days of unpretentious and affordable board games, like Monopoly? Well, they are far from over, at least according to Philip Orbanes. This new account of the history of Monopoly brings hope to board-game aficionados, and edification to anyone interested in how the great game of real estate got its start.

Seventy-two years ago, Monopoly sparked a craze unrivaled by any other game in history. The image of Rich Uncle Pennybags, later known as Mr. Monopoly—the distinguished gentleman who dons a top hat, cane, and handlebar moustache, and was originally modeled after the real-life Mr. Monopoly, J. Pierpont Morgan—would become ubiquitous. The exciting stroll down the Atlantic City boardwalk, the agony of Going to Jail, and the thrill of getting rich produced Monopolyphiles who could give the younger generation of video gamers a run for their money.

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There is, for instance, Marc Winters, a 49-year-old financial adviser from California who owns over 3,000 different worldwide editions of Monopoly. His collection is "probably the world's largest," writes Orbanes. Probably? Other stories of the staggering number of Americans who have devoted much of their lives to collecting Monopoly, and exploring the game's past, are mind-boggling.

Orbanes is one of them. A former senior vice president at Parker Brothers and a historical consultant for Hasbro Games—Hasbro owns Parker Brothers, Monopoly's parent company—Orbanes was once asked to "shape up" Monopoly's official rules and to serve as chief judge at the U.S. and World Monopoly Championships, a job he still holds. You don't succeed at these jobs without being fastidious, so it's no surprise that Orbanes fills his book with much historical detail (read: lots of names and dates).

When played by the rules, an average game of Monopoly takes 90 minutes—and it won't take any less time to wade through the explanations here of patent law, the numerous modifications made to Monopoly over the years, Monopoly knock-offs, legal disputes and bidding wars over ownership, and the backgrounds of the many individuals involved in the game's formation.

With each chapter, the elaborate timeline of Monopoly's evolution becomes a bit more disjointed. True Monopolyphiles and history buffs will appreciate the appendices, however. There, readers will find excerpts from original patents, the original game rules, as well as a complete list of all

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the affinity editions ever published (*I Love Lucy*, *The Simpsons*, *The Lord of the Rings*, NFL Monopoly, etc.). Though the narrative here is often tiresome, it doesn't take away from Orbanes's ability to underscore just what has made the game so appealing to generations of players: "Monopoly can inspire hope in anyone who plays it. For many, Monopoly is the first economic teacher suggesting that a richer life is available if one is willing to reach for it."

He uses the term "first economic teacher" literally. Monopoly got its start in an economics classroom in the early 1900s when Scott Nearing, a young, leftist economics professor at the University of Pennsylvania, brought a hand-made copy of something called the Landlord's Game into his classroom to teach the evils of rent gouging. Elizabeth Magie Phillips, an actress whose father had taught her the merits of Henry George's single tax, had invented and patented the Landlord's Game in 1903. It would become the forerunner to Monopoly, catching on quickly in economics classes around the country.

However, George Parker, founder of Parker Brothers, initially rejected the Landlord's Game because of its "complexity" and "instructive overtones." Orbanes points out that the learned professors and students "who kept the Landlord's Game alive did not bridge the gap between collegiate endeavor and nationwide fad." Instead, it took an unemployed radiator repairman named Charles Darrow to redesign it into the game Parker Brothers eventually published.

Having lost his job at a steam boiler company after the 1929 Crash, Darrow spent his time playing and making improvements to his beloved Monopoly. He purchased dice and play money at a dime store, typed and painted title deed cards on laundry cardboard, sliced wood moldings to make houses and hotels, and added graphic icons to the spaces on the board. He began to sell the game to Philadelphia department stores, with considerable success. And it was Darrow's 11-year-old niece who gave him the idea for using metal tokens as playing pieces. She and her friends liked to use the charms from charm bracelets.

Robert Barton, president of Parker Brothers, was also charmed by the new and improved game: In early 1935 he invited Darrow to the Parker showroom in New York and made him an offer. Parker Brothers officially published the game later that year.

Monopoly is the bestselling commercial board game in the world, with

Charles Darrow

Bettmann / Corbis

more than 250 million copies sold worldwide since 1935. The stats are impressive, but even more impressive are the anecdotes collected here of people who owe their very freedom to the game. By far the most powerful is the chapter on the game's influence during World War II, when Red Cross workers delivered Monopoly boxes to Allied airmen imprisoned in German POW camps. Inside the boxes were "low-profile escape tools, maps, and compasses hidden inside their game boards, and real currency tucked under the game's colorful bills." The games got past camp inspectors because they were considered "pacifiers" that kept prisoners occupied with something other than escape schemes.

Still, the game faced opposition in Italy and Germany. Mussolini did not want capitalistic products sold to his people, but the Italian company that produced the game was able to appease Il Duce by changing the spelling of Monopoly to Monopoli, and including fictitious fascist street names on the game board. Monopoly was always kept in stock during World War II, though shortages of certain materials would force Parker Brothers to replace metal tokens with wooden pawns. These downgrades didn't affect the game's popularity: General Patton once telegraphed George Parker to thank him for Monopoly, which had raised the spirits of his troops.

Monopoly also served as a symbol of capitalism in the struggle against communism, especially in the late 1950s. It was played underground in Eastern Europe, "[ruffling] the feathers of many Soviet officials who considered it an insidious tool of capitalism."

Readers will find a glossy photo gallery featuring the different versions of Monopoly and related games, from the Landlord's Game (1906) to the Monopoly Mega Edition (2006). Orbanes also intersperses pages of text with delightful photographs: There's one of George Harrison playing Monopoly during the Beatles' 1964 American tour, and another of the players at the first organized World Monopoly Championship in 1973. Orbanes closes with nail-biting, play-by-play accounts of the U.S. and World Monopoly Championships he's judged over the years.

Even those who prefer video games to Monopoly will have to concede that Orbanes knows his stuff, and tells the story with enthusiasm. A good attention span may be required to plow through some of the historical details, but it's worth the effort—just to get a taste of Orbanes's passion for the game: "Monopoly is both visceral and allegorical. It has flair; it speaks without uttering a sound. If the dice don't roll our way, Monopoly appears as an unreliable friend. But when they do, Monopoly is our buddy, our trusted pal." ♦

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Parody

SPORTS AND GLOBAL WARMING
As the Planet Changes,
So Do the Games We Play;
Time to Pay Attention
—Sports Illustrated *cover, March 12, 2007*

the weekly Standard
April 2, 2007

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